The Getting Illinois Low Income Seniors and People with Disabilities Online Demonstration Project

Funded by the U.S. Department of Commerce

National Telecommunications and Information Administration

Stage One

Six Month Formative Evaluation Findings

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The findings and conclusions presented in this report are those of the project team alone and do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions, or policies of the officers and/or trustees of Northern Illinois University. For more information, please contact Jim Ciesla at jciesla@niu.edu or (815) 753-3409 or Diana Robinson at drobinson@niu.edu or 815.753.0955.

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Acronyms and Terms

Ambassador - residents of project facilities who assist CPMs with CLASP delivery.

ARRA - The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, popularly known as the economic stimulus program. Federal source of funding for the project.

Backpack - a web based information storage and retrieval system used by Connected Living, Inc. to support company activities and management processes. Connected Living uses this system to maintain company documents and make those documents available to CPMs and others involved in program delivery.

BTOP - Broadband Technology Opportunity Program administered by the United States Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, through which this project was funded.

CLASP - Connected Living Adoption and Sustainability Program, the computer and Internet adoption model used for the project.

CLC-Computer Learning Center.

CLIP - Connected Living Internet Portal, the simplified and adapted proprietary Internet portal developed by Connected Living that is used in CLASP.

Coalition - (see Illinois Senior Internet Adoption Coalition)

Community Program Manager - Connected Living employee assigned to each project buildings to serve as the primary service and training deliverer of CLASP.

Connected Living - (formerly known as MyWay Village, Inc.) A Quincy, Massachusetts based- company that provides technology adoption programs for seniors. Connected Living is the BTOP grant recipient and project administrator.

CPM - (see Community Program Manager)

DSSA - Don S. Samuelson Associates, co-author of the grant that funded the project with responsibilities that include coordinating the market research, evaluation and information dissemination activities of the project.

HUD - United States Department of Housing and Urban Development

Illinois Senior Internet Adoption Coalition - ("the Coalition") - a group of local housing authorities and private owners of Section 8 and low income housing facilities located across northern Illinois whose facilities host the project.

Formative Evaluation – a method of program evaluation that focuses on what is and is not working while a program is forming for improvement purposes.

Influencer- A well-known and trusted building resident who is recruited to support the project and assist in project implementation and recruitment. This role may be formal or informal.

NIU - Northern Illinois University, home institution of the evaluation team.

NTIA - National Telecommunications and Information Administration; an agency of the United States Department of Commerce and recipient of ARRA funds used for BTOP projects across the U.S.

RUS - Rural Utility Service, a program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture that extends loans and grants to projects that bring broadband service to rural areas.

SBA - Sustainable Broadband Adoption, one of three focal areas of the BTOP program that is designed to increase Internet and broadband usage and adoption for vulnerable populations.

Section 8 – A section of the United States Housing Act administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development that provides rental assistance and vouchers to private landlords for people in low-income housing.

Summative Evaluation – A method of program evaluation that judges the worth of a program at the end of the program activities and focuses on program outcomes.

Summary of Six Month Project Outcomes, Findings and Recommendations

Key Six-Month Project Outcomes

1. Connected living successfully launched the project in all 23 facilities.

2. 1,161 people have attended project launch parties many others have attended other project awareness-raising events.

3. Discussion group sessions have attracted 7,037 unique visits from building residents.

4. All 23 project buildings have completed the first round of twelve-week training sessions, 9 buildings have completed two rounds of training, and 4buildings have begun the third round of training.

5. Connected Living has undertaken news and media-based promotional efforts (public announcements, press releases, etc.) that have reached an estimated 696,736 people in the communities surrounding the 23 project buildings.

6. 1,529 or 53.6 percent of building residents and581 neighborhood residents have enrolled in computer training.

7. 613 or 40.1 percent of the building residents who enrolled in computer training graduated.

8. 208 people from building neighborhoods who enrolled in computer training graduated.

9. 638 free computers have been given to building residents, and 8 refurbished computers have been given to neighborhood training participants who have graduated from the project.

10. 32 building residents and 8 neighborhood training participants subscribed to the internet as a result of the program.

Six-Month Formative Findings and Recommendations

Finding 1: Connected Living has developed and uses criteria for the selection and hiring of Community Program Managers that are consistent with the goals of CLASP and the project.

Finding 2: Connected Living has recruited and hired Community Program Managers with experiential backgrounds relevant to CLASP and the project. The CPMs are highly qualified to serve in their role.

Finding 3: Connected Living describes, and their CPMs know how to use, an adaptive strategy to overcome language barriers, but that strategy has limitations. The project may be hampered by language barriers.

> *Recommendation 1: Connected Living should make it a priority to assess the English language abilities of the building and community residents and accommodate the needs of non-English speakers. Some key CLASP materials should be available in other languages.*

Finding 4: Connected Living has well developed training materials and processes for training Community Program Managers including a skills assessment. However, while the material and processes are actively used, the outcomes of the training are uncertain. Some Community Program Managers indicate that the training is inadequate.

> *Recommendation 2: Connected Living should assess the training needs of Community Program Managers and provide additional training as necessary*.

Finding 5: Connected Living has well-developed processes to provide continuing training to Community Program Managers.

Finding 6: The Community Program Managers are well-regarded by building residents and Coalition representatives for their competence, professionalism, and rapport with participants.

Finding 7: The Community Program Managers spend most of their time interacting with building residents and project participants in activities directly related to CLASP.

Finding 8: The Community Program Managers are actively and effectively managed by Connected Living. Company and project standards and policies are clear, supervision is consistent, and professional standards are enforced.

Finding 9: Connected Living has designed and deployed a comprehensive system of measuring all aspects of CLASP activities and have trained the CPMs in its use.

Finding10: Connected Living has successfully installed and equipped the computer learning centers necessary for the project in the 23 facilities within the five-month time frame originally anticipated.

Finding 11: All of the CLCs are functional and meet the needs of the project. Some are small, occasionally crowded, and may not allow easy access for people with functional limitations.

> *Recommendation 3: Assess the use patterns of the CLCs and, where necessary, make more capacity available. Longer hours of operation and more staff might be required to make crowded CLCs more accessible. Crowding and long wait times may deter enrollment in the project.*

Finding 12: Connected Living CPMs receive the training and ongoing support to effectively use the technology in the computer learning centers

Finding 13: Project buildings do not have operational broadband networks.

Recommendation 4: Work with Coalition partners to resolve the technical issues impeding installing broadband networks in project buildings.

Finding 14: Connected Living has a well-designed awareness-rising process that fulfills its stated purpose of encouraging building residents to participate in the project.

Finding 15: While it is not possible to determine which awareness-raising efforts were the most influential in persuading people to enroll in the project, the launch parties are a high profile culmination to those efforts. They are highly motivational.

Finding 16: The Community Program Managers use the CLASP awareness-building process effectively.

Finding 17: Graduation events are highly visible celebrations. They are moving tributes to the participant's individual achievement and serve to further build awareness of the project and inculcate the project into the culture of the buildings.

Finding 18: The outcomes of project outreach activities have been inconsistent. Outreach activities vary considerably by facility.

Finding 19: Community Program Managers receive little formal training on outreach techniques.

Recommendation 5: Revisit the role of the CPMs in outreach activities or assign this responsibility to another project team member.

Finding 20: Access to project buildings is limited for safety reasons. The security measures are a significant obstacle to the success of outreach efforts. They restrict the ability of neighborhood residents to participate in discussion groups, computer training, and open lab.

Recommendation6: Work with Coalition partners to make buildings more accessible to people in the neighborhood while ensuring that building security remains paramount.

Finding 21: Connected Living has experienced difficulty obtaining baseline information about computer and Internet use from the residents of the project buildings. The source of the difficulty lies mostly in building residents reluctance to release personal information.

Recommendation 7: Connected Living should redouble efforts at administering the baseline surveys as the project becomes more deeply inculcated in the culture of the buildings and as CPMs develop rapport and trust with building residents. These efforts are important not just to the survey but to the long-term sustainability of the project in each building.

Finding 22: CLASP computer training is based on a written curriculum used throughout the project. The CPMs use the curriculum consistently and proficiently.

Finding23: The CPMs identified several barriers to participant computer learning. The most prominent among the barriers is low levels of literacy and cognitive and mental health disabilities. These barriers adversely affected the rate of completion of the training.

Finding 24: CPMs effectively apply adaptive strategies to accommodate a wide range of learning and physical barriers presented by project participants.

Finding 25: Discussion groups are a popular and important means by which building residents gain exposure to and become involved with the project. They help integrate computer and Internet use into the culture of the project buildings.

> *Recommendation 8: Continue to develop discussion group topics of interest to younger residents of project buildings and communities.*

Finding 26: CLIP is an appealing, simplified, easy-to-learn Internet portal that effectively serves as a beginning to CLASP computer training. Project participants and CPMs rated it highly.

Finding 27: The CLIP portal is visually appealing. It reduces potential project participant's reluctance to enroll in the training and helps to stimulate interest in computers and the Internet. The user friendliness of CLIP is an important aspect of CLASP.

Finding 28: Awareness raising activities were successful in recruiting participants to the project.

Finding 29: Although a solid training program, the CLASP computer and Internet training curriculum would benefit from revisions based on prevailing standards of instructional design for adult learners.

> *Recommendation9: Revise the CLASP computer and Internet training curriculum to reflect best practices in instructional design for adult learner.*

Finding 30: CLIP, also a very effective training resource, could be improved by addressing features that limit its accessibility by persons with disabilities.

> *Recommendation10: Connected Living should conduct a thorough review of CLIP to ensure all of its content accommodates individuals with disabilities. It currently does not meet ADA accessibility requirements.*

Finding 31: Project participant's initial computer skill levels are not routinely assessed. This makes it difficult to assure that participants are placed in appropriate levels of training.

> *Recommendation 11: Develop a method of assessing Participant's initial level of computer and Internet skills and placement guidelines, develop an SOP on their use, and train CPMs to use the assessment and placement guidelines. Develop a reporting system to track placements and changes in placements*

Finding 32: The CLASP end-of-training computer and Internet basic proficiency evaluations are not used consistently by CPMs

> *Recommendation 12: Develop a consistent procedure to use for end-of-training computer and Internet proficiency to ensure consistency in skill attainment and to assure that new computers are issued only to those with appropriate computer and Internet skills.*

Finding 33: The project gives free computers to participants who have completed the CLASP training process. The awarding of free computers at graduation ceremonies served to acknowledge the achievement of individual participants and to generate awareness and positive support for the project in project buildings and neighborhoods.

Finding 34: Opinions varied considerably among the many people interviewed regarding the factors that influenced participation and non-participation in the project.

> *Recommendation 13: Connected Living should continue efforts to recruit participants to the project. The marginal gains are likely to be small but could improve as the project becomes more deeply inculcated in the culture of the buildings and as CPMs develop rapport and trust with building residents.*

The Project

This report is a six-month formative evaluation of a federally-funded demonstration project in northern Illinois that is intended to promote sustained computer internet use by the elderly and people with disabilities. The project being evaluated is titled "Getting Illinois Low Income Seniors and People with Disabilities Online ("the project"). It is funded by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) through their Broadband Technology Opportunities Program with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds. Based on this legislation the NTIA developed and now administers the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) which is the federal funding mechanism for three project categories: (1) comprehensive community infrastructure, (2) public computer centers, and (3) sustainable broadband adoption (SBA). The public policy objective of these projects is to increase broadband Internet usage and adoption, especially to vulnerable populations where broadband technology traditionally has been underutilized. Many of these projects include digital literacy training and outreach campaigns to increase the usefulness of broadband in people's everyday lives.

The grant recipient is Connected Living, Inc., a company whose core business is to provide technology adoption programs for seniors. DSSA Management Strategies was the principal author fo the BTOP proposal and brings to the project deep expertise in managing on-site computer learning centers for residents of government assisted housing and other buildings serving low-income seniors.

The main goal of the project is to engage in regular and sustained computer and Internet use by approximately 3,000 low-income seniors and people with disabilities residing in or around 23 public housing facilities and subsidized housing buildings located in northern Illinois. A second goal is to create at least 100 jobs, and a third goal is to identify promising practices that may widely disseminated and be adopted or adapted by other states, regions, or communities.

The Connected Living Adoption and Sustainability Program (CLASP) is the computer and Internet adoption model used by Connected Living for the project. A fundamental premise of CLASP is that Internet adoption is a process, not an event. Consequently, CLASP is a continuum broken into seven steps that begin with awareness-raising and conclude with activities that encourage participants to subscribe to the Internet. Other features of CLASP are that it is individually-centered, relationship-based, and uses the personal interests of participants to engage them in using the Internet. A free computer is offered to participating individuals as an incentive to enroll in and complete the computer and Internet training.

Another key project component is the Illinois Senior Internet Adoption Coalition ("the Coalition"), an entity formed for this project by DSSA Management Strategies. The Coalition consists of 14 organizations, mostly local public housing authorities that own or manage the 23 northern Illinois buildings participating in the project. They are located in Rock Island, Moline, Henry County, Rockford, DeKalb, Grundy County, Joliet, Oak Park, Kankakee and Chicago.

This formative evaluation report reflects information and findings as of June 30, 2011 and covers the period from October 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011. It is the first of three reports that will be produced

for this project. A second formative report will be developed at 12 months of project implementation and a final combined formative and summative evaluation will be produced after the 18-month project has concluded.

Legislative Context

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 provided the United States Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service (RUS) with $7.2 billion to expand access to broadband services throughout the country. Of those funds, ARRA provided $4.7 billion to NTIA to "support the deployment of broadband infrastructure, enhance and expand public computer centers, encourage sustainable adoption of broadband service, and develop and maintain a nationwide public map of broadband service capability and availability."

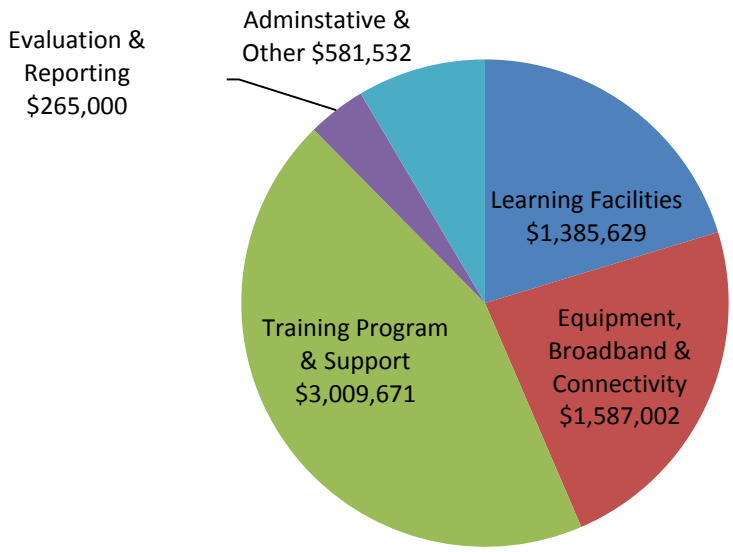
Based on this legislation the NTIA developed and now administers the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) which is the federal funding mechanism for three project categories: (1) comprehensive community infrastructure, (2) public computer centers, and (3) sustainable broadband adoption (SBA). The public policy objective of these projects is to increase broadband Internet usage and adoption, especially to vulnerable populations where broadband technology traditionally has been underutilized. Many of these projects include digital literacy training and outreach campaigns to increase the usefulness of broadband in people's everyday lives.

Project Funding

The overall cost of the project was originally projected to be $6,804,067. Of this total, $2,052,259 in matching funds were to be provided by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (IDCEO). The project was re-budgeted in March 2011 with an overall budget of $6,828,835 including only $1,206,550 in IDCEO matching funds. Additional funding has been provided by the Coalition which contributed $764,709 and by Connected Living which contributed $126,134 in matching funds, respectively Funds are allocated for five program components:

- Learning Facilities—$1,385,629
- Equipment, broadband access and connectivity—$1,587,002
- Training Program and Support—$3,009,671
- Evaluation and Reporting—$26,000
- Administration and other—581,532

Figure 1
Breakdown of Total Project Budget



Project Partners

Three partners are responsible for implementing the project. A description of each and their primary responsibilities are provided below.

Connected Living

The project applicant and grant recipient is Connected Living, Inc. Connected Living operates on a social entrepreneurial model. Their core business is to provide technology adoption program for seniors. The company, formerly known as MyWay Village Inc. was founded in 2007 and is based in Quincy, Massachusetts.

At the time of the project application Connected Living had experience operating on-site Internet training programs for seniors in assisted-living facilities in Massachusetts and at ten Brookdale Senior Living, Inc. locations in the Chicago area. Specifically, Connected Living's experience involved setting up on-site computer learning centers in retirement communities, recruiting and training on-site program managers who deliver essential computer training services specifically designed for seniors, and the organizational capacity to implement the project. Connected Living also brings to the project two key technological resources: a proprietary Internet portal, the Connected Living Internet Portal (CLIP), designed for use by seniors; and a comprehensive computer training process and curriculum called the Connected Living Adoption and Sustainability Program (CLASP).

The CLIP portal was designed and tested for ease of use and accessibility to elders and people with other physical limitations. It enables users develop foundation computer and Internet skills, taking into consideration common problems seniors and people with disabilities encounter including visual and dexterity limitations. Some of the key features of the CLIP portal are access to the Internet, email, photo sharing, social networking, health care applications, diaries and a customized calendar. The CLIP portal is the computer application at the heart of the CLASP training process.

Connected Living began working on the Project immediately based on the implementation strategy in the proposal.[1] They and started the process by setting up the computer learning centers within weeks of the award announcement

DSSA Strategies

While Connected Living is the project grant recipient, the vision and impetus for the project was provided by Don S. Samuelson, the principal of DSSA Strategies ("DSSA").DSSA has worked closely with Illinois state finance agencies, the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and public housing authorities across Illinois and the Midwest. Over the years, DSSA developed the expertise to manage both subsidized housing and the on-site computer learning centers for residents of government assisted housing and other senior buildings. DSSA used a combination of new and used computers, local area networks, Internet connections, and its own staff and volunteers to provide Internet and computer education and training – services provided as part of a package of resident services offered to DSSA's public and Section 8 housing clients and for its own account. Where Connected Living developed its service model in the for-profit senior living industry, DSSA gained experience in providing similar services to low income seniors in publicly assisted housing.

Illinois Senior Internet Adoption Coalition

In late 2009, DSSA collaborated with Connected Living to propose the Getting Illinois Low Income Seniors and People with Disabilities Online demonstration project. As part of this project, DSSA formed the Illinois Senior Internet Adoption Coalition. The Coalition is composed of 14 organizations, mostly local public housing authorities, that own or manage 23buildings in Rock Island, Moline, Henry County, Rockford, DeKalb, Grundy County, Joliet, Oak Park, Kankakee and Chicago, Illinois with DSSA and CL serving as Coalition managers. Each of the Coalition organizations is formally listed as a sub-recipient of the grant. The 23 Coalition buildings are the sites for the project.

The buildings selected to be Coalition partners are representative of low-income senior housing found throughout Illinois and, according to the grant application, are typical of low-income senior housing throughout the country.[2] Table 1 summarizes key characteristics of the participating organizations and the 23 buildings that make up the Coalition.

[1] NTIA Grant ID 4561, Exhibit C.

[2] NTIA Grant ID 4561, page 9.

Table 1
Illinois Senior Internet Adoption Coalition

Building	Residents	Sponsor	City	Organization Type
Adlai Stevenson	182	Housing Authority of Joliet	Joilet	Housing Authority
Azzerelli Tower	96	Kankakee County Housing Authority	Kankakee	Housing Authority
Bethel New Life	167	Bethel New Life	Chicago	Private Sec. 8
Bridgeport	86	Senior Lifestyle	Chicago	Private Sec. 8
Churchview	84	BMA Management, Inc.	Chicago	Private Sec. 8
Elois McCoy	62	Habilitative Systems, Inc.	Chicago	Private Sec. 8
Golden Years	150	Housing Authority of DeKalb	DeKalb	Housing Authority
Hillside Heights	122	Moline Housing Authority	Moline	Housing Authority
Hollis House	49	Housing Authority of Henry County	Kewanee	Housing Authority
John F. Kennedy	182	Housing Authority of Joliet	Joliet	Housing Authority
Mazon Park Tower	24	Grundy County Housing Authority	Mazon	Housing Authority
Midtown Tower	97	Kankakee County Housing Authority	Kankakee	Housing Authority
Mills Park Tower	195	Oak Park Housing Authority	Oak Park	Housing Authority
North Main	170	Rockford Housing Authority	Rockford	Housing Authority
Olesen Plaza	140	Rockford Housing Authority	Rockford	Housing Authority
Park Terrace	161	Rockford Housing Authority	Rockford	Housing Authority
Sankofa House	59	Sankofa Safe Child Initiative	Chicago	Private Sec. 8
Saratoga Tower	97	Grundy County Housing Authority	Morris	Housing Authority
Spencer Tower	207	Rock Island Housing Authority	Rock Island	Housing Authority
Spring Valley	185	Moline Housing Authority	Moline	Housing Authority
Sunset Heights	173	Rock Island Housing Authority	Rock Island	Housing Authority
The Oaks	75	Oak Park Housing Authority	Oak Park	Housing Authority
Washington	72	Housing Authority of Henry County	Kewanee	Housing Authority
Total	2,835			

The Coalition partners are diverse. Nine of the partners are public housing authorities and five are non-profit and for-profit building owners operating with Section 8 subsidies from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). They are located in the city of Chicago, the Cook County suburbs, and in several small cities in the collar counties of Chicago like Kankakee and Joliet. Some facilities are in small towns in rural counties such as Morris in Grundy County, DeKalb in DeKalb County and Kewanee in Henry County. Several are from metro areas like Rockford in north central Illinois and Rock Island in far northwestern Illinois. The Coalition partner organizations were chosen to participate in the project because the residents of their facilities display the demographic characteristics of groups least likely to use computers and the Internet—low-income people who are elderly or who have disabilities or both.

The Coalition partners participated in the BTOP application process by generating local support for the project. Their role in the project is to actively support the Connected Living staff, work on building and community events, help identify and recruit program participants, participate in community outreach efforts, and generally promote the project. The Coalition partners also play a key role in the long-term sustainability of the project by assuming responsibility for the effort after federal funding ends in June 2012.

Connected Living Adoption and Sustainability Program Model

The Connected Living Adoption and Sustainability Program (CLASP) is the computer and Internet adoption model used for the project. Connected Living developed CLASP through several demonstration projects carried out in 2009-2010. A fundamental premise of CLASP is that Internet adoption is a process, not an event. Consequently, CLASP is a continuum broken into steps. Given that the target population for which CLASP was designed is different than the target population of the Illinois BTOP project, Connected Living has made adaptations to CLASP. The seven steps that comprise the adapted version of CLASP are described in more detail in the section titled Six-Month Findings and Recommendations, but are summarized briefly below.

1. *Awareness-Raising*
   About one month prior to the project launch a series of awareness-raising activities is conducted to encourage residents to enroll in the project. Activities include meetings with various building personnel and the Resident Council, filling out baseline surveys on residents, "Town Hall" events, informational mailings, the posting of flyers, and a party to officially open the computer learning center.

2. *Assessment of Beginning Skills and Capabilities*
   Each resident choosing to participate in the computer training is assigned to a project staff member to establish rapport and learn the participant's computer and Internet-related interests. Skill level is assessed and the participant is assigned to one of three training levels: beginner, intermediate and advanced.

3. *Computer and Internet Training*
   The computer and Internet skills training in the CLASP program is provided to participants by hands-on group sessions. Training is delivered in one hour sessions over the course of 12weeks. Written lessons start with very basic computer skills and build up to higher level skills.

4. *Assessment of the Training*
   Participants are asked to demonstrate their proficiency in each of the computer and Internet skills associated with the level of training provided. If any of these skills have not been mastered, a new training plan is developed to address any deficiencies. After the participant passes a skill assessment they receive a free computer and Internet connectivity.

5. *Personalized Internet Use Plans*
   After project participants have received their new computers, the CPMs meet with them individually to discuss ongoing computer use and to develop a personalized "Internet Discovery Plan. "Discovery plans are based on each participant's interests and motivations for using the Internet and identify specific web-based applications and Internet sites for the participant to pursue on their own with support from the building CPM and the Connected Living Help Desk.

6. *Integrate Internet Use into Daily Life*
   Activities are scheduled to encourage the development of a broader culture of computer and Internet usein the buildings served by the project. These include regular discussion groups in common areas of the buildings, open labs, Friday Family Nights, and various Internet-related activities and games.Residents not participating in the project are encouraged to attend.

7. *Encourage Internet Subscription*
   Ensuring that participants have the skills to use the computer and Internet, providing them with a free computer and Internet connectivity, and fostering a broader culture of computer and Internet utilization are intended to demonstrate the ongoing value of the Internet to project participants.

Evaluation Approach

The effectiveness of the project in attaining its goals and objectives is being evaluated by Northern Illinois University through a subcontract with DSSA Strategies. This evaluation report is the first of two formative evaluations that will be produced for the project at month intervals. A third combined formative and summative report will be produced after the 18-month project has concluded.

Six questions are being used to guide the evaluation of the project:

1. What essential program elements contributed to the success or failure of the project during various phases of implementation?

2. What factors influenced participation and non-participation in the project?

3. What effects does the project have on computer and Internet utilization of program participants?

4. What effects does the project have on the knowledge, skills and attitudes related to computer and Internet use of program participants?

5. What effects does the project have on the financial, health, social and civic well-being of program participants?

6. What effect does the project have on program participants' adoption and sustained use of the Internet?

This six-month report will focus on the first two questions. The 12-month formative evaluation report will have preliminary findings on several additional questions, and the final combined formative and summative report will address all six questions.

Eight data collection methods were used for this first formative evaluation.

1. A two-page baseline survey of baseline resident characteristics was developed by Connected Living and administered to the residents in the 23 buildings participating in the project. These data were

coded and entered into a database by Connected Living and the results will be shared with the NIU evaluation team.

2. A seven-page resident survey for project participants was developed by NIU to assess baseline computer and Internet usage and was administered by the CPMs during project orientations. These surveys were transmitted to NIU for coding and data entry.
3. Email surveys were developed by NIU and administered to all participating CPMs, ambassadors, and building owners and managers (Coalition members).
4. Semi-structured telephone interviews were conducted with CPMs, Coalition members, Connected Living managers and other project staff, and other stakeholders.
5. On-site interviews were conducted with CPMs, ambassadors, volunteers, building residents, Coalition members and other stakeholders during visits to project buildings.
6. On-site observations of numerous project events such as discussion groups, kickoff parties and graduations.
7. An independent expert in instructional design was contracted to review the CLASP training materials, the CLIP portal, and other instructional materials.
8. Content review of more than 35 unique documents and over 500 pages of Connected Living corporate policies and procedures, project management information, and videos of key project events and activities.
9. Email survey data were coded and analyzed using SPSS software.

Field notes, photographs, audio recordings made during various field observations, and Connected Living project documents were analyzed using standard content analysis techniques used in the social sciences to identify common themes, issues and opportunities. A summary of response rates for the various data collection methods is provided below.

1. Connected Living collected 1,342 two-page baseline surveys.
2. Connected Living collected and NIU has received 321 resident surveys.
3. A total of 18 (82%) CPM email surveys and 14 (52%) Coalition email surveys were received.
4. A total of 16 semi-structured telephone interviews were conducted of CPMs, Coalition members, Connected Living managers, other project staff, and other stakeholders.
5. A total of 27 on-site interviews were conducted with CPMs, ambassadors, volunteers, building residents, Coalition members, and other stakeholders.
6. Members of the evaluation team observed 6 project events including discussion groups, kickoff parties and graduations.

The findings of this report are based on the project as of June30, 2011.Primary data collection began in March and continued though the last week in June. Selected project developments that have occurred after June 30 have been noted.

Six-Month Findings and Recommendations

Evaluation Question 1: What essential program elements contributed to the success or failure of the project during various phases of implementation?

Nine key project components have emerged over the first six months of the project. These fall into three distinct phases: building needed infrastructure, engaging building and community residents, and building computer and Internet skills. Each phase has three components as listed below.

A. Building the needed infrastructure
   1. Hiring and training the CPMs
   2. Setting up the computer learning centers (CLCs)
   3. Installing broadband in the buildings

B. Engaging building and community residents
   1. Conducting awareness-raising activities
   2. Developing rapport
   3. Collecting baseline data

C. Building foundational computer and Internet skills
   1. Delivering training
   2. Assessing proficiency
   3. Awarding computers

This section uses these nine components to frame the evaluation findings and recommendations.

A. Building the needed infrastructure

Three project elements made up the essential foundation of the project: the Community Program Manager, who anchored the project support team in each building; the computer learning centers (CLCs) that became the hub of training activity; and Internet connectivity that would enable project participants to apply , continue to develop, and sustain their new skills.

1. Hiring and training the CPMs. Community Program Managers were the bedrock of the project in the 23 participating communities and were crucial to the successful implementation of CLASP.

Finding 1: Connected Living has developed and uses criteria for the selection and hiring of Community Program Managers that are consistent with the goals of CLASP and the project.

In the project grant application, Connected Living described five primary attributes for CPMs. They are:

- prior work experience related to entry-level computer and Internet instruction, ideally with low-income seniors and the disabled,
- educational experience related to seniors, teaching, and computer/Internet training,
- teaching and counseling skills necessary to work effectively with seniors and the disabled,

- personality traits like patience and respect to inspire trust and confidence with seniors and people with disabilities as they acquire new computer and Internet skills, and
- a value system oriented to helping others learn new skills to promote independence and self-sufficiency.

Other important attributes include language skills, cultural sensitivity and the ability to communicate effectively in one-on-one sessions and small and large groups.

Finding 2: Connected Living has recruited and hired Community Program Managers with experiential backgrounds relevant to CLASP and the project. The CPMs are highly qualified to serve in their role.

The evaluation team reviewed job postings for CPMs on the company web site.[3] Connected Living succeeded in incorporated these attributes in their published job announcements, and the result is illustrated in Table 2. As a group, the CPMs report having have a wealth of experience relevant to the project. Three out of five had prior teaching experience teaching and almost all (94%) had experience working with seniors and people with disabilities. A significant proportion, 56 percent, had experience working with people in low income housing and 83percent had worked with people in minority groups. Only 39 percent reported having experiencing teaching introductory computer skills. Some of their prior professional experiences include work as a: Red Cross caseworker, AmeriCorps/VISTA volunteer, school teacher, case manager, mental health worker, and long-term care coordinator.

In addition to the CPM's qualifications, Connected Living has done a good job of matching CPMs to the resident populations in the buildings they serve. This is particularly important because CLASP places great emphasis on relationships between participants and CPMs; the fewer cultural barriers the more effective the CLASP Internet adoption process.

Finding 3: Connected Living describes, and their CPMs know how to use, an adaptive strategy to overcome language barriers, but that strategy has limitations. The project may be hampered by language barriers.

The evaluation team visited buildings serving large populations of non-English speakers. Yet, the survey results indicate that a very small number of the CPMs have the ability to speak a second language. This finding is inconsistent with the intentions outlined in the BTOP funding application.[4] Although NIU evaluation team observed CPMs effectively using bilingual residents as translators to communicate with non-English speaking program participants, their ability to deliver the continuum of services called for in CLASP is partially hampered by language barriers.

[3] Job posting (htte://mywayvillage.com/careers.html) accessed May 23, 2011.
[4] NTIA Grant ID 4561, page 25.

Table 2
Experiential Background of Community Program Managers

	Teaching	Teaching Introductory Computer	Working with Seniors and People with Disabilities	Working with People in Low Income Housing	Working with People in Minority Groups	Ability to Speak a Foreign Language
Experience	61%	39%	94%	56%	83%	4%
No Prior Experience	39%	61%	6%	44%	17%	96%

Recommendation 1: Connected Living should make it a priority to assess the English language abilities of the building and community residents and accommodate the needs of non-English speakers. Some key CLASP materials should be available in other languages.

Finding 4: Connected Living has well developed training materials and processes for training Community Program Managers including a skills assessment. However, while the material and processes are actively used, the outcomes of the training are uncertain. Some Community Program Managers indicate that the training is inadequate.

Connected Living has developed and uses a formal training program for CPMs. The evaluation team was provided copies of and has reviewed the written materials used to train CPMs. They include:

- CPM Computer Literacy Assessment
- CPM Details of the Journey
- The Connected Living Approach to Teaching Computer and Internet Skills
- Community Program Manager Training
- Human Resources Introduction
- Time Tracker & Stats User Guide
- Group Leader Training
- Community Program Manager Orientation Training Checklist

In addition to the above mentioned documents, the evaluation team was given the agenda to several CPM meetings and training sessions as examples.

The “Computer Literacy Assessment” is the first activity CPMs must complete. It appears to be designed to assure the requisite computer skill level and to double as training on the correct use of company reports. The “Details of the Journey” and “Community Program Manager Training” documents cover topics related to sustainable broadband adoption. They describe the context of the project, the application of CLASP to affordable housing environments, the operational details of CLASP, and challenges inherent in teaching computer skills to seniors and people with disabilities that include mental, cognitive, and physical limitations. Embedded in this material

are clearly delineated company policies about equipment use, safety, reporting requirements, meeting participation, dress code, and other aspects of the CPMs duties and expected conduct.

The "Connected Living Approach to Teaching Computer & Internet Skills" document emphasizes specific pedagogic techniques for delivering CLASP. Included in this material is content on assessing participant needs along physical, emotional, social, convenience, and intellectual dimensions, a paradigm of learning common in service delivery training. The training also describes the concept of redundant cueing—a technique widely taught and applied in elder service delivery. CPMs are encouraged to apply the skills presented during their training by role playing and discussing specific case studies. The document set "Group Leader Training" gives detailed instruction on how to prepare and conduct discussion groups.

These documents are accessible to CPMs on Backpack, Connected Living's property management web portal. The CPMs indicated that they periodically access and use these materials. Taken as a whole the training and orientation materials are comprehensive, skill-based, and clear. They provide an orientation to all of the aspects of CLASP.

Most of the materials in these documents are designed to be used in group training meetings. A sample meeting agenda (dated December 31, 2010) shows the training occurs in about six hours. The CPMs report that some of the content is provided online and used as self-paced tutorials. During interviews the CPMs described several peer-to-peer techniques of training that are used. A newly hired CPM said she felt very supported by a fellow CPM she described as her mentor. An experienced and well regarded CPM said she is regularly sent to other buildings to assist in training newer or less experienced CPMs. Others reported having shadowed more experienced CPMs as a means of gaining first-hand experience in aspects of CLASP delivery. Many other CPMs reported that they relied on previous work experience as much as the training provided by Connected Living.

Table 3 summarizes the CPMs' response to the online survey question about the overall adequacy of the training they received to prepare them for their role in the project. Of the total, 44 percent responded that their training was adequate. Two representative comments were:

> *"Yes. They explained the program; they gave you the tools you needed, lesson plans, paperwork, stats sheets, etc."* (CPM, May 2011)

> *"Yes. I shadowed another CPM and learned quite a bit, but also fell back on my prior knowledge, ability skills and training."* (CPM, May 2011)

Table 3
CPM Opinion of their Training

	Adequate	Some Reservations	Not Adequate
Initial Training	44%	17%	39%

However, the remaining 56 percent had some reservations about their training or thought it was inadequate. The following comment was offered by one CPM:

> *"No, that is the one component missing from the MWV/CL program. I believe as an organization they should invest in their employees and provide adequate training to be successful in the communities we assist. Training is provided on reports and documents, but not how to effectively train individuals we assist."*(CPM, May 2011)

It is the opinion of the evaluation team that much of the negative perception about training came from CPMs hired earlier in the implementation of the project. While the survey did not identify individual respondents, it is possible to sort responses by length of employment. Many of the CPMs who thought the training was inadequate were employed three or more months prior to the survey, and most of those who found the training adequate were employed less than three months. The evaluation team received a full set of the training materials in early February, 2011, so the materials were fully developed by that time (at the latest), but it is possible that the more senior CPMs training was incomplete or inconsistent.

> ***Recommendation 2: Connected Living should assess the training needs of Community Program Managers and provide additional training as necessary***.

Finding 5: Connected Living has well-developed processes to provide continuing training to Community Program Managers.

The CPMs also receive training on an ongoing basis. They are required to participate in weekly training and support conference calls. Most of the CPMs interviewed thought the calls were an excellent source of ongoing training. In addition to the weekly conference calls, the CPMs attend quarterly meetings where they receive continuing education. While not asked to rate the adequacy of the ongoing training, Many CPMs made commented on it relevance:

> *"I attended a group training for Community Program Managers which focused on Connected Living and policies, along with issues we were/are having at our facilities—not on the curriculum."* (CPM, May 2011)

In addition to the various forms of formal training provided, the CPMs show a great deal of self-efficacy and resourcefulness in acquiring skills. They describe referring to college textbooks for updates on computer skills, watching YouTube tutorials, and reaching out to other CPMs for information and advice.

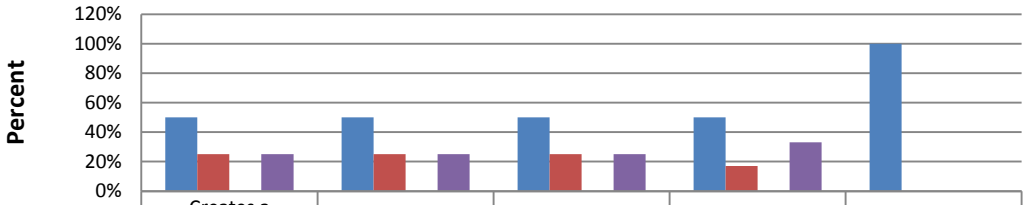
Finding 6: The Community Program Managers are well-regarded by building residents and Coalition representatives for their competence, professionalism, and rapport with participants.

The evaluation team observed and interviewed about one-half of the project CPMs while they were on the job in their respective buildings. Several were among the first CPMs hired and had been employed by Connected Living for more than six months, and others were new (one was on the job for just six days). The on-site visits provided ample opportunity to watch the CPMs in most aspects of their work including teaching group sessions, moderating discussion groups, teaching participants one-on-one during open lab, and participating in launch and graduation parties.

The evaluation team observed that the CPMs were very comfortable in their roles. The CPMs had a welcoming demeanor with an easily identifiable connection to the program participants. They demonstrated fluency with the CLASP activity they were performing. When requested they readily showed examples of participants' case files, personalized Internet use plans, statistics and time tracker forms, and other relevant written materials.

In addition to the direct on-site observations, the evaluation team designed and implemented a survey of "key contacts" from the Illinois Senior Internet Adoption Coalition.The majority of CPMs were rated as good or very good in key aspects of their performance (see Figure 2).The relatively large proportion of "don't know" responses is attributable to the fact that some of the key contacts were CEOs/Executive Directors who had less day-to-day familiarity with the program. Their responses should be understood as "no basis for judgment." Taking that into account, the opinions of the key contacts were generally positive.Three-quarters of the respondents thought the CPMs created an environment in which program participants felt encouraged and supported, and the same percentage thought their CPMs engaged participants and explained the material clearly. Two-thirds responded that the CPMs in their facility used the correct pace of instruction with participants.

Figure 2
Coalition Ratings of CPMs



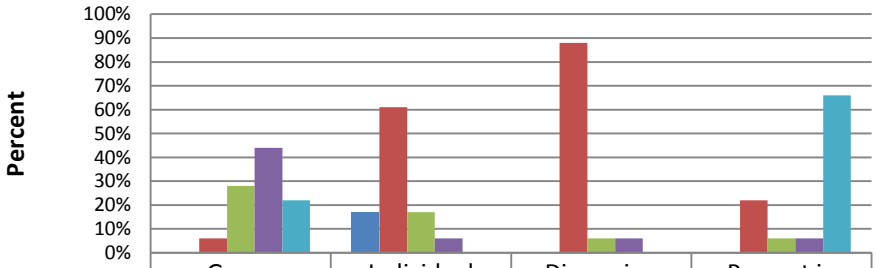
	Creates a positive learning environment	Engages all learners	Explains content clearly	Adjusts pace to each learner	Displays professionalism
Very good	50%	50%	50%	50%	100%
Good	25%	25%	25%	17%	0%
Poor	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Don't know	25%	25%	25%	33%	0%

It is noteworthy that 100 percent of the key contacts rated the professionalism displayed by the CPMs as very good. Connected Living emphasizes an employee code of conduct which includes standards of professionalism and may account for this high rating.

Finding 7: The Community Program Managers spend most of their time interacting with building residents and project participants in activities directly related to CLASP.

Among the questions on the survey administered to the CPMs was how they spend their work day. As indicated in Figure 3, most of their time is spent in the CLC delivering training either in group or individual sessions. CPMs also report spending 1-2 hours leading discussion groups on a typical day. (NOTE: the figures involve double counting. CPMs spend most of the day in the CLC while doing training).

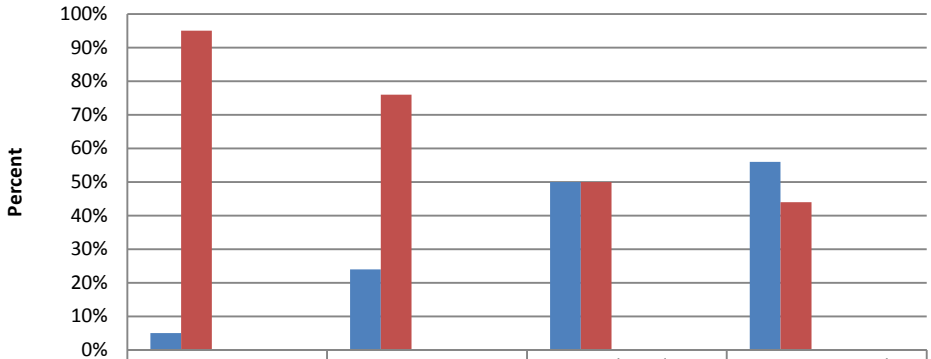
Figure 3
How CPMs Spend their Work Day:
Training Activities



	Group Training	Individual Training	Discussion Group	Present in CLC
None	0%	17%	0%	0%
1-2 hours	6%	61%	88%	22%
3-4 hours	28%	17%	6%	6%
5-6 hours	44%	6%	6%	6%
7-8 hours	22%	0%	0%	66%

The CPMs also are required to prepare activity reports and convey those reports to the project General Manager on a weekly basis. They report spending between one and two hours on this activity each day. Very little or no time in an average day was spent in technical trouble shooting. When asked by the evaluators, the CPMs indicated that technical problems with hardware or software did not occur often and were quickly resolved by either the Company Tech Director or the Connected Living help desk. CPMs also spent very little or no time in continuing training on aspects of CLASP delivery (see Figure 4).

Figure 4
How CPMs Spend their Work Day:
Non-Training Activities



	Preparing Reports	Learning How to Teach	Technical Troubleshooting	Interacting with Coalition
None	5%	24%	50%	56%
1-2 hours	95%	76%	50%	44%
3-4 hours	0%	0%	0%	0%
5-6 hours	0%	0%	0%	0%
7-8 hours	0%	0%	0%	0%

Finding 8: The Community Program Managers are actively and effectively managed by Connected Living. Company and project standards and policies are clear, supervision is consistent, and professional standards are enforced.

During the site visit interviews the evaluation team asked CPMs to describe the management structure and processes used by Connected Living in the day-to-day operation of the project. They were asked specific questions regarding the division of work, leadership and authority, unity of direction, discipline, communication, and degree of centralization.

Responsibility for the management of the project has been assigned to a General Manager who was hired specifically for this project. The General Manager oversees two Operations Directors who are regional managers, each of whom has responsibility for half of the project facilities divided on a geographic basis (north and south).

The CPMs reported to the evaluation team that expectations of them are clear and that they are actively supervised. They are required to participate in telephone conferences twice each week, one focusing on technology support and the other focusing on CPM training and program operations. The CPMs describe communicating with project managers and with each other by telephone, Skype and by email. In addition to weekly electronic contacts, the CPMs attend quarterly meetings held by the General Manager. The CPMs describe the conference calls and meetings as helpful.

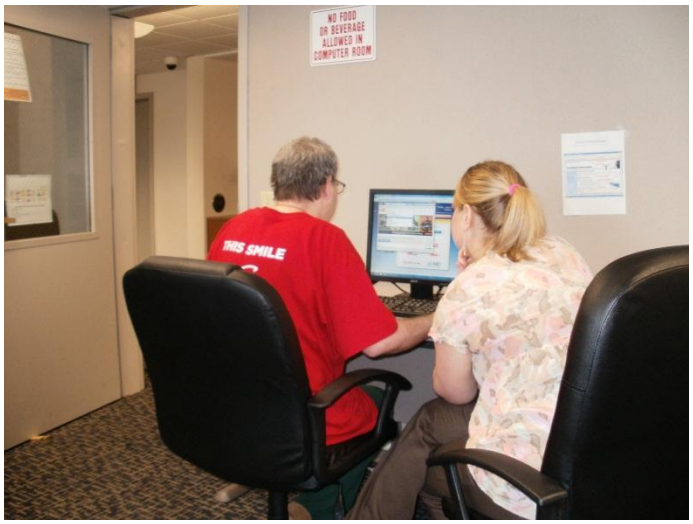
The General Manager and regional managers actively enforce company policies. CPMs report knowledge of other CPMs being “written up” for violations of company standards, and one

having been terminated for failure to perform job duties. The CPMs report frequent visits by their managers, some announced and some unannounced. While the CPMs feel supported, they indicate that they are held accountable for the quality of their work and adherence to company standards.

Finding 9: Connected Living has designed and deployed a comprehensive system of measuring all aspects of CLASP activities and have trained the CPMs in its use.

Each CPM is trained to collect detailed statistics on all aspects of CLASP and program activities via the "Time Tracker & Stats User Guide" training document. The evaluation team witnessed many instances of CPMs using various tracking forms to enumerate participation in CLASP services and record their daily activities.

CPMs are required to forward all statistics to the project General Manager who employs a grant administrator responsible for compiling reporting project statistics.



CPM Erica Flecker works one-on-one with participant during open lab at Hillside Heights, Moline, IL June 2011.

2. **Setting up the computer learning centers (CLCs).**The focal point of CLASP in each of the 23 buildings is a staffed onsite Computer Learning Center (CLC).

Finding10: Connected Living has successfully installed and equipped the computer learning centers necessary for the project in the 23 facilities within the five-month time frame originally anticipated.

Connected Living's goal was to have all 23 CLCs operational in the first five months of the project. This timeline was to ensure timely implementation of the project.

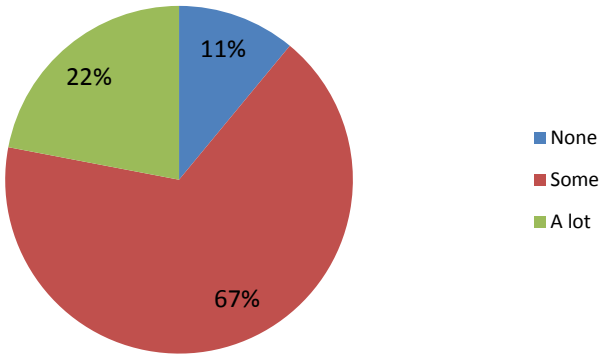
The evaluation team contacted many Coalition partners and gathered information from at least one person familiar with the project from each partner. These individuals reported that

Connected Living staff initiated contact with them in advance of the CLC set-up to gain entry to the building and to begin planning the CLC. Some Coalition members described slight delays in setting up the lab that were due to slow delivery of the workstations or computers or in the process of cabling and deploying Internet services, but the delays were short and most were outside of Connected Living's control. Those reports were few in number and do not represent a systemic problem. The Coalition representatives reported that interactions with Connected Living management and technical staff were positive and led to solutions of problems. The first building launch took place on November 12, 2010 (Habilitative) and the last on April 6, 2011 (Mills Park Tower), indicating that the five month implementation goal was met.

Several Coalition partners indicated that they faced internal challenges to honoring their agreement to participate in the project in such areas as finding suitable space in their buildings or encountering unanticipated challenges in modifying the space (e.g., HVAC problems).However, for the most part, they reported that they were able to overcome the challenges and offer suitable space. Several indicated that their Housing Authority would have liked to have had better (or larger) space to offer the project but encountered unavoidable constraints.

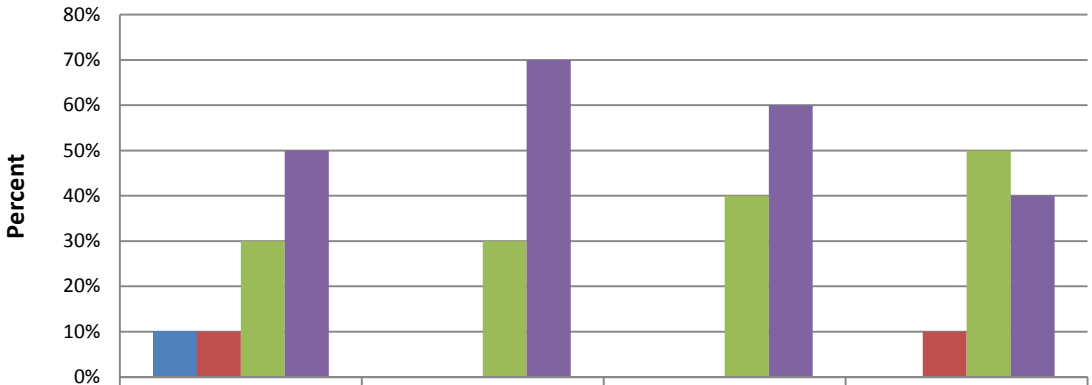
The key contacts at Coalition partner organizations were asked several questions about the CLCs. These findings suggest the Coalition partners are familiar with the CLCs and played a significant role in their implementation. Results from interviews indicate that the Coalition partners had a high degree of communication and coordination with Connected Living program staff and management and with DSSA during the implementation phase of the project (see Figure 5). They describe the implementation as having gone smoothly.

Figure 5
Degree of Coalition Involvement in Design of CLCs



The Coalition contacts had positive views of the computer learning centers finding them to be inviting and attractive and good uses of building space. They believed that the CPMs and ambassadors do a good job of staffing the centers (see Figure 6).

Figure 6
Coalition Views of the Computer Learning Center



	Ease of access	Inviting and attractive	Good use of space	Well-staffed
Poor	10%	0%	0%	0%
Fair	10%	0%	0%	10%
Good	30%	30%	40%	50%
Excellent	50%	70%	60%	40%

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Several accessibility issues were identified by building managers who described some of the CLCs as small and cramped and inaccessible to people with mobility challenges or to people confined to wheelchairs. The evaluation team confirmed this through site visits to several of the CLCs. For example, the CLC at Park Terrance in Rockford was small and obscurely located, but the CPM and volunteer at that location did not see these as a significant barriers to their use. They thought more work stations and therefore larger capacity would be helpful, but they were able to effectively accommodate participants by offering more frequent sessions.

The CLC at Spring Valley is small and often crowded

The CLC at the Spring Valley facility was particularly crowded. There were numerous people waiting to use the computers during an open lab session. The CPM at that facility designed a

system of time limits to accommodate the high demand for computer access during open lab. Shown standing (above) are several project volunteers recruited from the neighborhood helping during open lab.

The evaluation team found the computer learning centers to be well maintained and well organized. Most were inviting, spacious, well lit, and easy to locate and access. The key building contacts gave similar assessments of the CLCs and were glad to have them in their buildings.

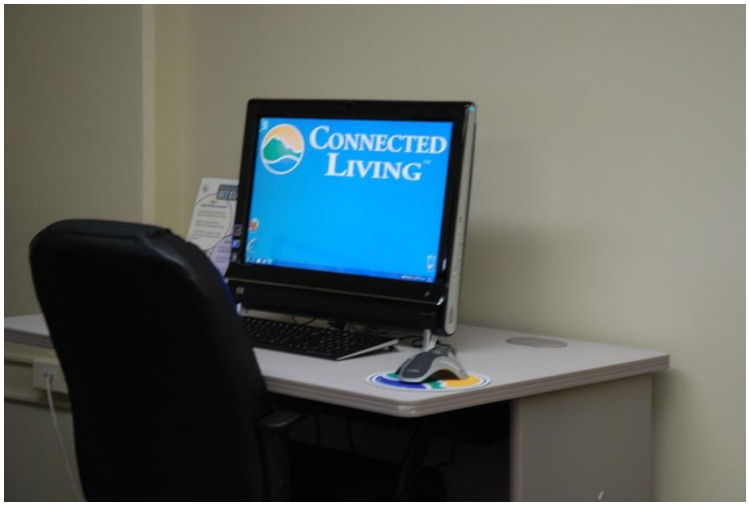
All of the computers in the CLCs were operational at the time of the evaluation team site visits. The CPMs and ambassadors indicated that when technical issues occur, they are usually quickly resolved by Connected Living technical staff. Each CLC had a functional Proxima projector, at least one printer, at least one large screen computer monitor, one touch screen monitor, a wheelchair accessible workstation, several large print keyboards, track balls and other assistive devices.

Finding 11: All of the CLCs are functional and meet the needs of the project. Some are small, occasionally crowded, and may not allow easy access for people with functional limitations.

> ***Recommendation 3 : Assess the use patterns of the CLCs and, where necessary, make more capacity available. Longer hours of operation and more staff might be required to make crowded CLCs more accessible. Crowding and long wait times may deter enrollment in the project.***

Finding 12: Connected Living CPMs receive the training and ongoing support to effectively use the technology in the computer learning centers.

The CPMs reported that they received training on the use of adaptive devices. The evaluation team confirmed that this content is included in the Connected Living training document, "Community Program Manager Training," which covers the topic at a basic level. The CPMs reported that adaptive strategies have been the subject matter of their biweekly conference calls and that they readily learn and share adaptive techniques. CPM fluency in the use of adaptive devices and techniques is encouraged and supported by Connected Living.



Computer with touch screen monitor at Olsen Plaza in Rockford, IL

The impressions of the CLCs given during interviews with building residents and program participants were almost universally positive. No person encountered during the site visits was unaware of the CLC or the project.

When asked their opinion about the CLCs resident's responses were positive:

> *"This place gives us hope. Most of us can't afford computers and it's so nice to have this."*
> (Resident of Olsen Plaza)

> *"I'm not in the program because I already do computers, but open lab is great. I use the computers all of the time"*
> (Resident of Hillside Heights)

3. **Installing broadband in the buildings.** Broadband connectivity is an important component of the project. Participants are strongly encouraged to become permanent Internet users once they complete training.

Finding 13: Project buildings do not have operational broadband networks.

During site visits the evaluation team was unable to confirm that any project buildings had operational broadband networks. The project goal of having project participants subscribe to the Internet after the project has concluded will be stymied if needed broadband connectivity is not provided in a timely way.

Recommendation 4: Work with Coalition partners to resolve the technical issues impeding installing broadband networks in project buildings.

B. Engaging building and community residents.

After the needed human and technological foundation for the project has been put in place, the process of informing residents of the 23 buildings and surrounding neighborhoods becomes paramount. Activities must be launched that effectively explain the project in ways that are meaningful to prospective participants, individual relationships must be built between project staff and residents, and after a threshold level of trust has been established, baseline data must be collected so that progress may be measured.

1. **Conducting awareness-raising activities.** The first step in the CLASP process is awareness-raising. An awareness-raising campaign is undertaken in each of the 23 buildings prior to the launch of the project.

   Finding 14: Connected Living has a well-designed awareness-raising process that fulfills its stated purpose of encouraging building residents to participate in the project.

   Pre-launch activities include meetings with building management, resident services coordinators, and other essential building or Coalition staff to build support for the program. CPMs also meet with the building Resident Council, hold building "Town Hall" meetings, and send mailings to building and community residents about the project. About one week prior to the launch the CPMs place posters and flyers at prominent locations throughout the building. It is during the pre-launch period that CPMs canvass the building and conduct a baseline assessment of the computer and Internet use and needs of building residents. The baseline assessment is a two-page paper survey.

   These pre-launch activities are designed to take place during the month prior to the launch. It is the intent of Connected Living to have the building CPM hired, trained, and in place so they can coordinate the pre-launch process. The CPMs are provided a "Pre-launch Checklist" and trained on how to operationalize the various pre-launch activities on the checklist.

   Connected Living gathers statistics on marketing and promotion activities undertaken by the CPMs in the first six months of the project. These figures show that there were a total of 1,346 unique visits to various pre-launch events by building residents and 670 from residents from the surrounding neighborhoods, indicating success in generating interest about the project from outside the buildings. Connected Living statistics indicate that project-wide, CPMs and other project staff have issued 23,597 personal invitations to attend pre-launch events, and that company efforts with various news and media-based promotional efforts (public announcements, press releases, etc.) have reached an estimated 696,736 people in the communities surrounding the 23 project buildings.

Finding 15: While it is not possible to determine which awareness-raising efforts were the most influential in persuading people to enroll in the project, the launch parties are a high profile culmination to those efforts. They are highly motivational.

Members of the evaluation team attended several launch parties and watched Connected Living-produced videos of several more. During the field visits of the launch parties numerous building residents, project staff, Housing Authority representatives, community leaders and political leaders were interviewed.

Launch parties are the conclusion of the pre-launch awareness raising activities described in the first step of CLASP. They are festive events. The parties are held in the common area or great room of each building with the intent of being highly visible. The CPMs aggressively promote attendance at launch parties throughout the pre-launch awareness raising phase. Residents are encouraged to bring friends and relatives. Cake and drinks are served and balloons and music add to the celebratory ambiance. There are "least" and "most" contests and prizes awarded for age, children, grandchildren, length of residence in the building, and other games and participatory activities.

Table 4 shows "Launch Day" attendance statistics. Project-wide, Connected Living has been able to encourage high levels of lunch party attendance. In total 1,161 residents, friends, relatives, and building neighbors have attended the 23 launch parties. In addition to recruiting potential including Housing Authority officials, local political leaders, members of the media, and others. The presence of the "dignitaries" gives the project credibility by showing a broad base of local support.

Connected Living managers serve as the master of ceremonies of the launch parties. Featured are numerous speakers including leaders of Connected Living, building management, and the Housing Authorities. The speeches are intended to generate enthusiasm and support by being future-oriented and emphasizing computer and Internet connectivity. The speakers focus on the practical benefits of being online, the importance of computer skills, and the myriad of Internet based applications that potential participants would find useful, interesting or entertaining. Resident reactions to the motivational speeches are generally positive. Connected Living has produced and shows video testimonials about the benefits of computer and Internet access that are moving and highly motivational and well-received by party attendees.

Launch parties included tours of the CLC, a ribbon-cutting ceremony, and invitations to enroll in the classes. Table 4 shows the training course enrollments for the first round of training that occurred immediately after the launch party. While not all people who signed up for the training immediately after the kickoff party were building residents, the far right column suggests the impact of the pre-launch outreach efforts. As many as 62.5% of building residents enrolled. The weighted average percent of building residents who enrolled in the training is 41.6% or 1,093 of the total resident population (of 2,835) of the 23 buildings.

Table 4
Day of Launch

Building	Number of Adult Residents	Party Attendees: People from Neighborhood and Building	Party Attendees: Guests and Dignitaries	People Signing-up[5] for Class	Percent of Building Residents Signing up for Classes
Adlai Stevenson	182	57	6	54	29.7
Azzerelli Tower	96	45	4	50	52.1
Bethel New Life	167	47	20	61	36.5
Bridgeport	86	54	4	37	43.0
Churchview	84	40	10	37	44.1
Elois McCoy	62	56	5	30	48.4
Golden Years	150	62	8	57	38.0
Hillside Heights	122	56	8	57	46.7
Hollis House	49	19	4	19	38.8
John F. Kennedy	182	51	11	52	28.6
Mazon Park Tower	24	15	4	15	62.5
Midtown Tower	97	57	2	55	56.7
Mills Park Tower	195	82	6	80	41.0
North Main	170	56	11	53	31.8
Olesen Plaza	140	70	8	46	32.9
Park Terrace	161	66	16	72	44.7
Sankofa House	59	27	4	28	47.5
Saratoga Tower	97	52	13	47	48.5
Spencer Tower	207	70	3	64	23.7
Spring Valley	185	52	8	48	26.0
Sunset Heights	173	65	0	67	38.7
The Oaks	75	42	12	44	58.7
Washington	72	20	3	20	37.8
	2,835	1,161		1,093	41.6

While the kickoff events are very festive, some of the residents interviewed expressed skepticism about the project. For example:

> *"What's going to happen to this program when the money runs out? They are not talking about that."* (Building Resident, Golden Acres, February 2011).

But the prevailing sentiment expressed by building residents and visitors at the launch event was positive. One building resident enthused:

> *"I've never seen this many people from this building so excited about something. We are glad for this program"* (John F. Kennedy, January 2010).

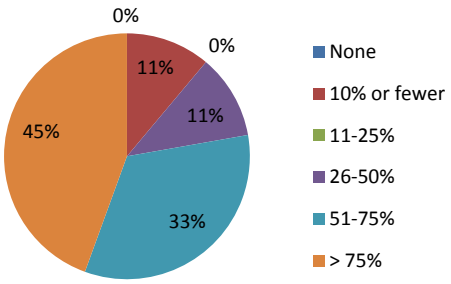
[5] Most people enrolling in the first round of training were building residents, but these figures may include neighborhood residents who were recruited through outreach activities.

Finding 16: The Community Program Managers use the CLASP awareness-building process effectively.

During interviews, key contacts from the Coalition maintained that a large percent of residents were aware of the program prior to the kickoff event. When asked if they had suggestions regarding awareness building, one building manager responded "I don't think there was a soul in my building who didn't know about the program. "Yet others remarked on the challenges posed by an accelerated start-up. Another building manager stated, "The program was installed so quickly there wasn't much time before the party for people to know what it was about."

The evaluation team included questions about Connected Living's awareness raising efforts in the Coalition key contacts survey (see Figure 7). The majority opinion is that over one-half of building residents knew of the project before the kickoff event. Forty-five percent of the contacts thought that two-thirds of residents were aware of the project prior to the launch party.

Figure 7
Coalition Estimates of Resident Awareness of the Project Prior to Kickoff



The CPMs interviewed indicated that taken as whole, the pre-launch activities in which they were engaged were highly effective in raising awareness of the project and encouraging building residents to participate. Several CPMs indicated that their classes were fully subscribed before the launch party. Several CPMs indicated that they were not fully trained and in their buildings for long enough to fully carry out all of the pre-launch activities (for less than month), however, most thought the enrollments in the first round of training were robust. The CPMs indicated that they received a great deal of support from Connected Living in the days just prior to the launch to that helped raise awareness.

Finding 17: Graduation events are highly visible celebrations. They are moving tributes to the participant's individual achievement and serve to further build awareness of the project and inculcate the project into the culture of the buildings.

Graduations are formal events where project participants receive public recognition for completing CLASP training. As with the opening of the CLCs, the atmosphere is festive. They are held in the common area or great room of each building with the intent of being highly visible. Graduations are more formal compared to launch parties. The graduate's family members, friends, fellow building residents, and others are invited to attend. Attendees are well dressed, as if going to church. Cake and drinks are served and the room is decorated with banners, streamers and balloons. The graduating class marches in to Pomp and Circumstance—the graduations are styled somewhat as academic commencements.

Connected Living managers served as the master of ceremonies. Featured are numerous speakers including leaders of Connected Living "University" and representatives of building management and the Housing Authorities. Local political leaders were invited and often attended. Speeches were given that highlighted the project participants' achievement and which emphasized the benefits of computers and Internet connectivity. Several of the graduates were selected to speak as representatives of the graduating class.

Processional of Graduates at Stevenson Towers May 2011

Each graduate is individually recognized by being presented with a certificate of completion. Each graduate is presented with a free computer which is the highlight of the ceremony.

While not all project graduates attend the graduation parties, Connected Living statistics indicate that a total of 613 people graduated from training. This represents 40.1 percent of those initially enrolling in the training. A total of 638 free computers have been given to the participants.

Interviews with graduates indicated that they felt like they were starting "new lives" made possible by the regular use of the Internet. Many testified about how their discovery of the Internet and the development of Internet skills have changed their lives for the better. One graduate commented:

"I've never graduated from anything before. This feels good. This program has made many of us older people feel very proud. "(Stevenson Gardens, May 2011)

Finding 18: The outcomes of project outreach activities have been inconsistent. Outreach activities vary considerably by facility.

The secondary audience for the project consists of the seniors and people with disabilities living in the neighborhood surrounding the 23 facilities. The project is required to engage in community outreach activities with the goal of enrolling as many people as possible in CLASP, providing Internet training and assessment mechanisms, providing graduates with free computers, and encouraging permanent broadband subscription.

Table 5 summarizes the results of the community outreach efforts.

Table 5
Community Outreach

Building	Residents	Population in Building Census Tract	(Unique Visits) Attendance at Training Sessions	Number of Proficiencies Passed	Free Computers	Broadband Subscribers	NIU Surveys Completed
Adlai Stevenson	182	5,434	199	0	0	0	0
Azzerelli Tower	96	3,417	0	0	0	0	0
Bethel New Life	167	5,669	209	3	0	0	0
Bridgeview	86	4,257	00	0	0	0	0
Churchview	84	--	67	25	0	0	1
Elois McCoy	62	8,969	161	5	0	0	0
Golden Years	150	5,582	20	0	1	1	8
Hillside Heights	122	3,991	231	19	0	0	30
Hollis House	49	3,594	11	0	0	0	6
John F. Kennedy	182	--	313	24	0	2	0
Mazon Park Tower	24	3,545	109	2	0	0	1
Midtown Tower	97	5,576	0	0	0	0	0
Mills Park Tower	195	5,358	81	0	0	0	0
North Main	170	1,708	216	3	0	0	0
Olesen Plaza	140	--	9	7	0	0	0
Park Terrace	161	3,247	157	0	0	0	10
Sankofa House	59	4,519	123	10	3	3	0
Saratoga Tower	97	2,773	15	0	1	0	0
Spencer Tower	207	1,968	359	5	0	0	0
Spring Valley	185	4,227	1,134	105	0	0	114
Sunset Heights	173	1,955	97	0	0	0	0
The Oaks	75	3,753	57	0	0	0	0
Washington	72	3,322	26	0	0	0	2
	2,835	82,864	3,627	209	5	6	172

The outreach results are inconsistent. Particularly noteworthy is Spring Valley in Moline where 105 people have completed CLASP and passed the training. The figures show that many of the facilities are successful in attracting neighborhood residents to training sessions, but few have graduated large numbers of residents. It is likely that many of the people reflected in Column 4 were in the training process at the time the statistics were recorded and will eventually graduate. This lag results from the fact that most buildings enrolled primarily their own

residents in the first rounds of training and residents of the surrounding neighborhoods are more likely to be enrolled in later rounds of training.

It is difficult to generalize about the outreach efforts that have occurred thus far. Some characteristics of buildings with successful outreach programs cannot be replicated. For example, Spring Valley has many people in the immediate neighborhood participating in the project, but the Spring Valley facility is a complex of buildings interspersed with other dwellings in the neighborhood. There is a natural integration of facility residents and neighbors that tend to attract people to the project.

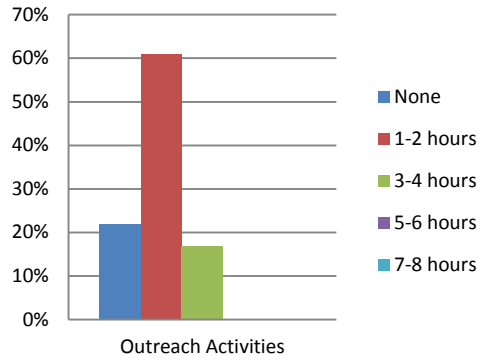
Another important consideration at Spring Valley is the ethnic and kinship ties between facility residents and people in the surrounding neighborhood. The Spring Valley neighborhood is home to a large number of people from the Togolese Republic in West Africa. The Togolese people at Spring Valley work as a group to encourage each other to engage in the project and have developed an informal system of translating CLASP content into French. This has resulted in relatively large number of outreach participants and graduates at Spring Valley. The CPM, ambassador, and volunteers have done an excellent job of facilitating this. Several other buildings serve people from distinct ethnic groups who have ties to others from their country and to family members living in the surrounding neighborhoods that make successful outreach possible.

The outreach efforts vary by building and setting. The degree to which the Coalition member organizations participate in outreach varies as well. Several of the Coalition partners have staff dedicated to outreach, while others play no role at all in outreach activities. For instance, the Joliet Housing Authority uses one of its full-time social services coordinators to spearhead outreach programs for its two participating facilities. Additionally, Collected Living has partnered with several well-known community leaders who serve as outreach “influencers,” giving the outreach efforts in several buildings a high degree of visibility and credibility in building neighborhoods. Connected living has identified several best practice models for project outreach activities. They include Coalition partner volunteer-led programs, efforts facilitated by the CPMs, and efforts lead by residents who have graduated from the project.

Finding 19: Community Program Managers receive little formal training on outreach techniques.

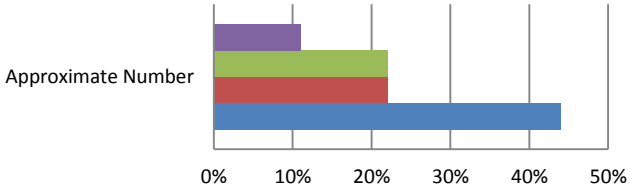
The CPMs were asked how much time they spend on the average day engaged in outreach activities. Most report relatively little time dedicated to this work (see Figure 8). When asked about their outreach activities the CPMs indicated that they realized it is an important project priority but that they felt ill equipped to engage in outreach. Several expressed the desire to have specially dedicated and trained ambassadors assigned to their building who could lead outreach efforts.

Figure 8
CPM Time Each Day on Outreach



The survey of the Collation key contacts included questions about community outreach. They were asked to estimate the number of community residents who enrolled in the project. These key contacts reported that very few community residents have enrolled in the project, with 44 percent reporting that none had been recruited to participate (see Figure 9). These results show that although outreach efforts have achieved limited success in the first six months of the project, 11 percent thought that more than 15 neighborhood residents were recruited into the project.

Figure 9
Community Resident Participation in the Project



	Approximate Number
More than 15	11%
6-15	22%
5 or fewer	22%
None	44%

Recommendation 5: Revisit the role of the CPMs in outreach activities or assign this responsibility to another project team member.

Finding 20: Access to project buildings is limited for safety reasons. The security measures are a significant obstacle to the success of outreach efforts. They restrict the ability of neighborhood residents to participate in discussion groups, computer training, and open lab.

The key contacts offered a number of steps that could be taken to improve outreach and serve more neighborhood residents. Several suggested that a free-standing CLC be created that would be accessible to the community. One respondent to the survey expressed building security concerns resulting from making the building accessible to outsiders. This issue was mentioned repeatedly to the evaluation team in the semi-structured interviews and should be considered a prevalent problem. The housing authorities are reluctant to have non-residents participate in activities in their buildings due to security concerns. Even when willing to allow community members access to the building, several housing authority executives indicated that it was technically difficult to issue pass codes non-residents for building access and that doing so violated existing housing authority policies.

Other respondents gave more direct suggestions, they include:

- newspaper advertisements
- flyers posted in nearby buildings
- advertisements in church bulletins
- speaking engagements at Kiwanis and Rotary and related service groups
- disseminating information to chamber of commerce "business after hours" meetings
- holding open houses
- referral bonuses for past participants

A review of the CPM orientation and training materials indicate that outreach techniques are not part of initial CPM training. Outreach activities are not part of CLASP and as such Connected Living had little experience organizing, planning and carrying out outreach activities of the type contemplated in the BTOP grant proposal. As a result the company has had to improvise outreach strategies. Evidence from recent project reports generated by Connected Living indicates that they are developing the capacity to conduct outreach.

Recommendation 6: Work with Coalition partners to make buildings more accessible to people in the neighborhood while ensuring that building security remains paramount.

2. **Developing rapport**. Although broad marketing and awareness-raising activities are essential to creating a general awareness of the project, building one-on-one relationships with residents is key. These individualized relationships allow on-site project staff to help residents understand the unique value of computer and Internet use for them and also builds a level of trust that allows residents to share basic personal information to help understand the effect of the project.

   The evaluation team interviewed numerous building residents, program participants, and community members during the building site visits. Their feedback about the CPMs was entirely positive. CLASP stresses the importance of good relationships between CPMs and program

participants. The CPMs have done a good job of establishing rapport with program participants and with building residents. The following typify the comments:

> "We have lots of fun with _____. He helps us more than just the program. He understands our circumstance. It's so nice to have him around. We love the program and we love him." (Program Participant, May 2011)

> "_____ is one of us. The computer classes are good, but she is great!" (Program Participant, June 2011)

The CPMs are provided a "Pre-launch Checklist" and trained on how to operationalize the various pre-launch activities on the checklist. For example CPMs are encouraged to spend time in areas of the buildings where residents congregate, get to know residents and identify "Influencers." Influencers are well-known, well-liked and highly visible residents. Given that the setting of the project is low-income and subsidized housing, many of the influencers are members of the building's resident council. Connected Living seems to have identified and targeted resident council members to serve as influencers.

3. **Collecting baseline data**. Understanding the effectiveness of this project in increasing computer and Internet use among the elderly and people with disabilities requires that a baseline of information be collected that describes the situation prior to the project.

Finding 21: Connected Living has experienced difficulty obtaining baseline information about computer and Internet use from the residents of the project buildings. The source of the difficulty lies mostly in building residents reluctance to release personal information.

Each CPM is given the task of canvassing their building, contacting each resident and requesting that each resident complete the baseline survey. The CPMs do this several ways. They go door-to-door introducing themselves and the project to the residents and request that residents fill out the survey, they request that residents complete surveys at the various pre-launch awareness building events, and they require residents who chose to participate in the project to complete the survey.

The evaluation team met with and interviewed several influencers. Influencers are well-known, well-liked, and highly visible residents. One indicated that some residents had concerns about privacy and that public housing residents can feel threatened when asked for information by "the government." Another influencer said the two-page baseline assessment Connected Living was administering had turned some residents away from the project despite the fact that they were not required to complete the survey to enroll in the project.

Similarly, several CPMs indicated that they have received some resistance to their efforts to collect baseline information because residents are concerned about privacy. They reported that while most residents interested in participating in the project willingly completed the survey,

some are reluctant. At least two CPMs said privacy concerns may be a "red herring" excuse from residents who cannot read or write or who do not understand and speak English proficiently. The CPMs from buildings with large numbers of residents with mental health problems indicated especially strong resistance to completing the survey.

Overall, by the end of June 2011, the 23 buildings participating in the project house approximately 2,835 residents. Connected Living has completed 1,342 baseline surveys—a yield rate of 43 percent.

Recommendation 7: Connected Living should redouble efforts at administering the baseline surveys as the project becomes more deeply inculcated in the culture of the buildings and as CPMs develop rapport and trust with building residents. These efforts are important not just to the survey but to the long-term sustainability of the project in each building.

C. Building computer and Internet skills

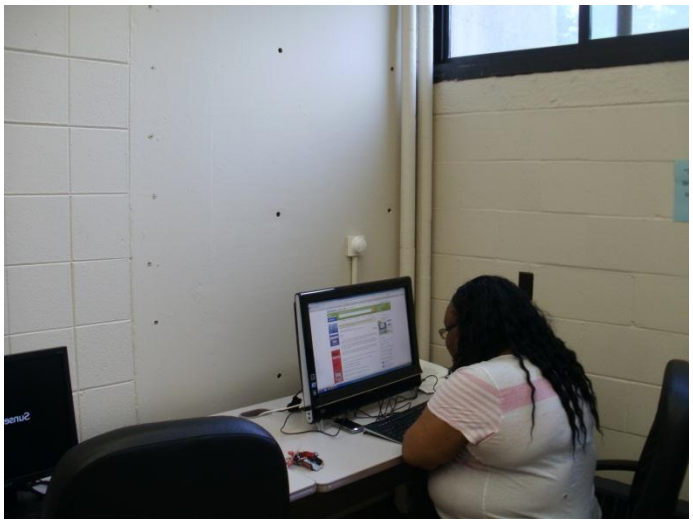
Attaining the project goal of long-term Internet usage requires a basic proficiency in computer and Internet skills. Connected Living's CLASP model includes a comprehensive training curriculum and uses proficiency assessments to determine when foundational skills have been mastered. A chief motivator for many project participants to go through the training is a free computer.

1. **Delivering training**. At the heart of CLASP is a computer training curriculum. The training is available in three levels: beginner, intermediate or advanced. Project participants are introduced to computers via the Connected Living Internet Portal (CLIP).

   Finding 22: CLASP computer training is based on a well-developed curriculum used throughout the project. The CPMs use the curriculum consistently and proficiently.

   Training is conducted in the building CLCs in one-hour group sessions over the course of 12 weeks. The curriculum consists of written lessons that can be enlarged and projected on a screen in the CLC for visual reference.

   Members of the evaluation team observed several class sessions and interviewed a number of CPMs and program participants about various aspects of the training. During the training sessions, the CPMs projected the lesson via an overhead projector visible to all seated in the CLS. The training material was well organized and easy to understand. The lessons are structured so that complex tasks are broken down into single tasks that participants can practice and master through repetition. The CPM guided the participants through one task at a time, stopping to demonstrate and offer assistance. The CPMs used contemporaneous judgment to adjust the pace of the instruction, pausing frequently to repeat instructions, and monitored each participant's progress through the lesson. Questions from the participants were answered promptly and courteously.

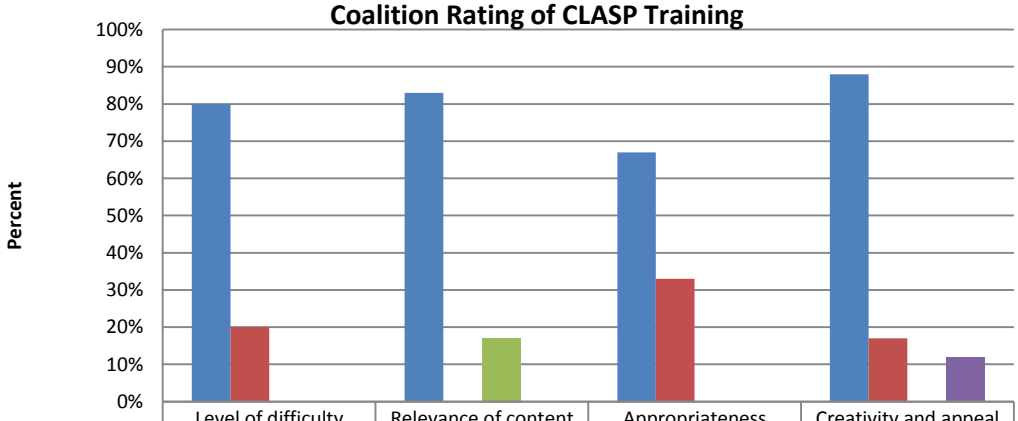


Participant in class, North Main Tower, Rockford, June 2011.

All of the CPMs interviewed indicated that the CLASP training process was easy for them to master and felt comfortable using it. Program participants asked about the training said it was easy to learn and covered tasks they found relevant. Several reported that they needed to take time either during class or during open lab to master particular skills they found challenging. For example several with poor typing skills took time to enhance their typing ability and reported that the curriculum's lessons on keyboarding were useful.

The Coalition key contacts were asked to rate CLASP training based on their experiences and observations. Figure 10 summarizes their responses.

Figure 10
Coalition Rating of CLASP Training



	Level of difficulty	Relevance of content	Appropriateness	Creativity and appeal
Very good	80%	83%	67%	88%
Good	20%	0%	33%	17%
Poor	0%	17%	0%	0%
Don't know	0%	0%	0%	12%

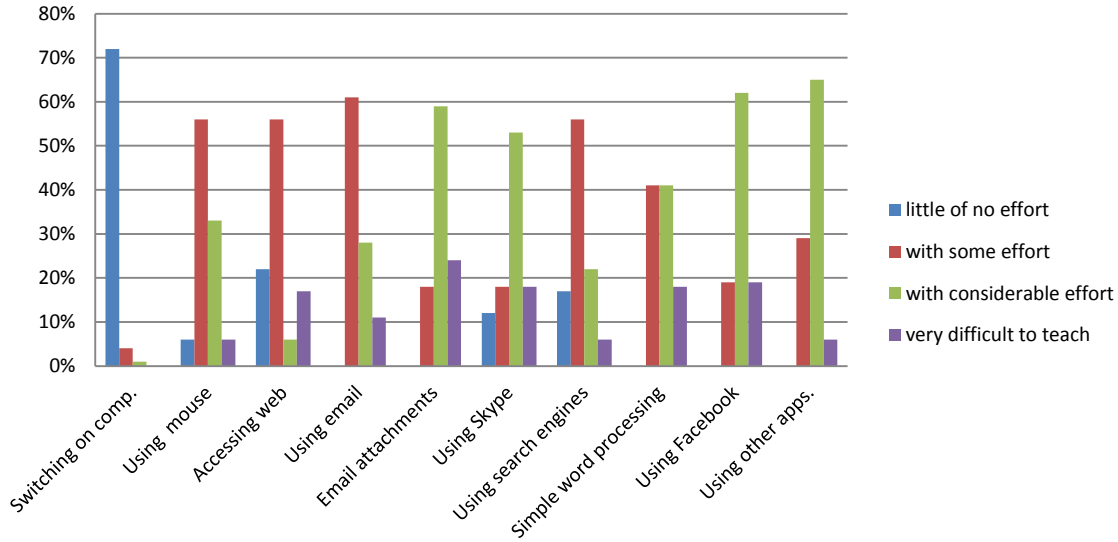
The key contacts generally had a favorable opinion of CLASP. In their view the program was easily adopted and targeted the right computer skill level. Several questioned the relevance of some of the content of the course material. This rating stems from the fact that several of the facilities serve non-elders. During interviews it was clear that some of the key contacts thought the curriculum was so heavily focused on the elders that younger participants did not find some aspects of the program engaging.

This being said, the results of the survey and comments from key contacts strongly indicate that the CLASP program was appropriate to the task of engaging non computer users, building their confidence and skills and encouraging adoption. General comments were positive from the key contacts about CLASP and the role of the CPM are in implementing and using the program.

Finding 23: The CPMs identified several barriers to participant computer learning. The most prominent among the barriers is low levels of literacy and cognitive and mental health disabilities. These barriers adversely affected the rate of completion of the training.

Figure 11 gives CPMs views on the difficulty of teaching selected computer skills that are part of the training component of CLASP. Some of the ratings are noteworthy. With the exception of switching on the computer, they report that most skills require some or considerable effort to teach.

Figure 11
CPM View of Difficulty in Teaching Various Computer Skills



For example, nearly 90 % of the CPMs found that teaching the very basic task of using a mouse requires some or considerable effort. They indicated that five of the skills -- adding attachments to email, using Skype, simple word processing, accessing Facebook and other computer applications—took considerable effort or were very difficult to teach. Taken as a whole these

findings indicate that although the computer skills being taught were basic, the participants ability to grasp and master the material required a considerable amount of instructional effort.

When asked for instances when participants experienced difficulty with mastering the CLASP training, the CPMs indicated that they encountered difficulty due to participants' readiness to learn stemming from low levels of literacy, limitations on ability to use keyboards, and participant's inconsistent ability to focus on lesson plans. The CPMs report that the latter of these problems stem mostly from mental health and substance abuse related limitations.

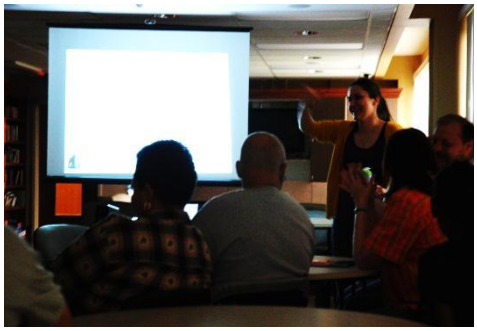
Finding 24: CPMs effectively apply adaptive strategies to accommodate a wide range of learning and physical barriers presented by project participants.

The CPMs described numerous adaptive strategies they use including referring participants to local literacy programs and providing additional instruction in keyboarding. Several CPMs indicated that participants with mental health disabilities were particularly difficult to engage and that those participants' levels of attendance and participation were typically very inconsistent, their skills attainment was poor, and their dropout rate was high.

A number of CPMs expressed a desire to have curriculum workbooks and homework assignments available as companions to the curriculum. One CPM pointed out that these materials would be excellent for participants with low levels of literacy, language difficulty, and other learning disabilities since some participants are embarrassed to reveal their learning deficits to CPMs and fellow participants. Several CPMs interviewed indicated that they have to repeat training content from class to class because participants forget basic terminology and skills between sessions.

Finding 25: Discussion groups are a popular and important means by which building residents gain exposure to and become involved with the project. They help integrate computer and Internet use into the culture of the project buildings.

Discussion groups are an important part of CLASP. Connected Living describes them as "a fun and interactive group activity that uses the Internet as a tool." They are regularly scheduled group events held in the common areas of the buildings. While topics vary, each is based on a specific theme and features web-based content including YouTube videos, music, photos, and trivia designed to encourage interest in the Internet. The CPM presents discussion points, shows videos, and moderates group discussion.



CPM Elisabeth Stites leads a discussion group at Park Terrace in Rockford, IL. June 2011.

Connected Living designed discussion groups to "enhance social engagement, augment community identity, increase memory recall, improve emotional well-being, improve validation of self, stimulate cognitive skills, and increase motivation to acquire new skills and knowledge."[6]

CPMs receive extensive training on how to moderate discussion groups. For example, the document "Group Leader Training" gives details on how to set up the room, set up equipment, publicize and recruit participants, and encourage group participation. This is important since the success of discussion groups is largely dependent on the skill of the CPM at leading them.

Discussion groups are popular. According to data provided by Connected Living shown in Table 6, a total of 7,037 unique discussion group visits have been recorded. Members of the evaluation team attended several discussion group sessions. They found that participants were encouraged to participate and did so freely. The rapport between participants and the CPMs was strong, and the topics held the participants interest. The CPMs observed led the group skillfully.

[6] Connected Living Document: "Group Leader Training: Connected Living Discussion Groups"

Table 6
Project Activities and Contacts with Participants

Building	Number of Residents	Flyers Posted	Open Lab Visits	One-on-one Training Encounters	Baseline Surveys Completed	Discussion Group Attendance	Group Class Attendance	NIU Surveys Completed
Adlai Stevenson	182	36	840	0	44	444	679	0
Azzerelli Tower	96	0	662	118	53	190	571	0
Bethel New Life	167	0	200	15	37	339	896	0
Bridgeview	86	14	447	25	42	231	529	0
Churchview	84	14	337	82	30	345	284	20
Elois McCoy	62	17	856	95	0	467	881	0
Golden Years	150	40	2,067	95	130	202	679	56
Hillside Heights	122	35	1,147	36	80	134	541	70
Hollis House	49	39	844	12	27	183	150	6
John F. Kennedy	182	34	1,102	21	71	647	831	0
Mazon Park Tower	24	39	428	5	18	134	128	17
Midtown Tower	97	0	957	0	0	447	951	0
Mills Park Tower	195	16	563	64	85	343	779	37
North Main	170	0	1,576	31	46	597	950	0
Olesen Plaza	140	13	840	130	46	209	487	54
Park Terrace	161	22	463	25	101	157	503	21
Sankofa House	59	4	279	41	56	191	405	0
Saratoga Tower	97	71	2,305	105	0	421	651	0
Spencer Tower	207	23	2,435	0	43	736	1,050	0
Spring Valley	185	8	249	11	131	104	256	31
Sunset Heights	173	40	624	99	86	115	1,32	0
The Oaks	75	27	1,062	72	82	251	529	0
Washington	72	32	1,154	16	36	150	126	9
	2,835	524	21,778	1,099	1,342	7,037	13,888	321

Connected Living has developed an extensive library of discussion topics that are available to CPMs. In interviews several CPMs suggested that more discussion group topics be developed that are relevant to younger people. While the CPMs were generally satisfied with the selection of topics and indicated that new topics are regularly put into the library, they thought more should reflect themes of interest to younger participants.

The CPMs indicated that discussion group was a very popular activity. They were pleased to be allowed to choose topics they thought relevant to residents of their building, emphasizing that they thought it important to match the discussion group themes with their residents' interests. Several said they allow residents to choose topics they find interesting.

Several CPMs pointed out that it was difficult to get permission from building management (Housing Authority or building owners) to allow people from the building neighborhood to attend discussion groups. Most of the 23 buildings limit access to non-residents for security reasons. The CPMs interviewed identified this as an obstacle to community outreach efforts.

Flyer posted in CLC Announcing Discussion Group, Sunset Heights, Rock Island, IL. May 2011.

Recommendation 8: Continue to develop discussion group topics of interest to younger residents of project buildings and communities.

Finding 26: CLIP is an appealing, simplified, easy-to-learn Internet portal that effectively serves as a beginning to CLASP computer training. Project participants and CPMs rated it highly.

Participants in the project are introduced to computers via the Connected Living Internet Portal (CLIP). CLIP is the computer application at the center of CLASP and is designed to enable seniors with little or no background using computers and the Internet to access the Internet with a minimal amount of training.

CLIP is proprietary and Connected Living has invested years of research in its development. The portal includes popular applications including messaging, photo sharing, memoirs, calendars, interactive brain games, music and books, wellness applications and other content training material.

While in the field, the evaluation team observed program participants actively using CLIP. Their feedback was almost universally positive. Many quickly bypassed portal features and used the Internet directly. Those that relied on the portal gave high reviews; those who were proficient Internet surfers seemed indifferent but not bothered by it. A typical comment:

> *"I didn't know computers could be so easy."* (Program participant, North Main Tower, May 2011)

Project CPMs also expressed favorable opinions of CLIP.

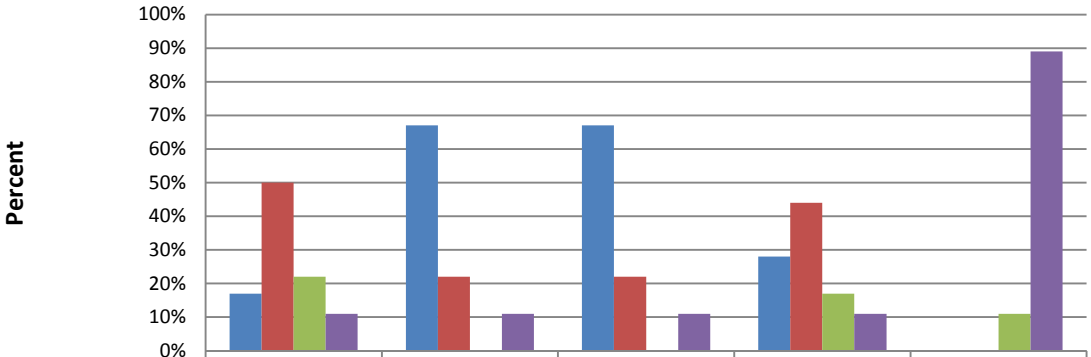
> *"Our people are all over the place with computer skills and CLIP is a great place for people to star. Some use it a lot. Some start surfing in ten minutes"* (CPM, April 2011)

Finding 27: The CLIP portal is visually appealing. It reduces potential project participant's reluctance to enroll in the training and helps to stimulate interest in computers and the Internet. The user friendliness of CLIP is an important aspect of CLASP.

The online CPM survey included several questions about the CPMs experience using CLIP. Figure 12 shows clearly that access to the Internet is the most popular aspect of CLIP. My Photos and My Memoirs are less popular with project participants than they might be for seniors living in independent living centers, for which CLIP was originally designed. This is important since taking photos and yearbook meetings are key pre-launch project recruitment activities. Based on these findings, emphasizing these activities during pre-launch awareness raising events might not appeal to the residents of low-income and subsidized housing. These results also show that My Mail is less popular than one might expect. This is somewhat paradoxical since most program participant email addresses reported to the evaluation team show the "@connectedliving.com" extension acquired by using My Mail in CLIP.

Figure 12

CPMs' Experience Working with CLIP



	My Photos	My Music	My Memoirs	My Mail	My Internet
Not popular	17%	67%	67%	28%	0%
Somewhat popular	50%	22%	22%	44%	0%
Quite popular	22%	0%	0%	17%	11%
Very popular	11%	11%	11%	11%	89%

Finding 28: Awareness raising activities were successful in recruiting participants to the project.

Connected Living statistics indicated that a total of 613 people graduated from training. This represented 40.1 % of those initially enrolling in the training or an attrition rate of 57.3%.

The evaluation team asked numerous people involved with the project including, CPMs, participants, non-participating building residents, and participants who dropped out of training to give reasons why participants "dropped out." Their responses, given in order of frequency, are:

- Learning problems, including low levels of literacy, and undocumented learning disabilities,
- Medical problems leading to nonattendance,
- Poorly treated or untreated mental health disabilities including substance abuse problems,
- Scheduling conflicts with work, medical appointments, and similar,
- Classes not available at convenient times,
- Lack of interest failure to see the relevance of computer and Internet training,
- Cyber security concerns, unwillingness to share personal information.

Finding 29: Although a solid training program, the CLASP computer and Internet training curriculum would benefit from revisions based on prevailing standards of instructional design for adult learners.

The evaluation team consulted with an expert in computer based instructional design for adult learners. The consultant was asked to base the review of the CLASP training curriculum on prevailing best practices in the field of instructional design. The detailed findings of that consultation are provided in Appendices A-D. These include:

- Appendix A: Connected Living Web Portal Content and Curriculum Materials Connections Based on Instructional Design Principles.
- Appendix B: Feedback on Beginner Computer Lesson PowerPoint Slides and Instructor Guide
- Appendix C: Feedback on 201 Series Computer Lesson PowerPoint Slides and Instructor Guide
- Appendix D: Feedback on Advanced Lessons

In sum, the consultant identified several design elements of CLASP that can be modified or enhanced that will to reflect prevailing standards of instructional design for adult learners and that will accommodate people with disabilities.

Recommendation 9: Revise the CLASP computer and Internet training curriculum to reflect best practices in instructional design for adult learner.

Finding 30: CLIP, also a very effective training resource, could be improved by addressing features that limit its accessibility by persons with disabilities.

The evaluation team consulted with an expert in computer based instructional design for adult learners to review the CLIP portal. The finding of that consultation is included in Appendix E. The consultant was asked to conduct the review using best practices in the field of instructional design. The result of that review revealed a number of accessibility issues. or example, none of the images and non-textual elements of CLIP have “ALT Tags” making it less accessible to people

with vision impairments. Another issue is that the vertical navigation buttons are inconsistent throughout different levels (pages) of the CLIP application.

Recommendation10: Connected Living should conduct a thorough review of CLIP to ensure all of its content accommodates people with disabilities. It currently does not meet ADA accessibility requirements.

2. Assessing proficiency.

Assessment of computer skills, both prior to training and at the end of training, is an important aspect of CLASP. CLASP Step 2 "Assessment of Skills and Capabilities" is where CPMs determine the appropriate training level in which to place participants. This step is vital since participant's skill propensities prior to training vary considerably. Step 4 "Assessment of the Training" is where participant's skill mastery is evaluated, any skill deficits are corrected, and is the eligibility determining criteria for the issuance of free computers.

Finding31: Project participant's initial computer skill levels are not routinely assessed. This makes it difficult to assure that participants are placed in appropriate levels of training.

During interviews the CPMs descriptions of how they assessed participant's initial computer skill level and placed them into training were inconsistent. Most CPMs indicated that participants self-selected the level training into which they enrolled. There was similar inconsistency in the way the CPMs made adjustments to training level during the course of the training program. A number indicated that they moved participants from the beginner to the intermediate levels mid-course to accommodate participant's skill level, but they made those judgments without guidance from standards and did not document the change. The CPMs indicated that the advanced curriculum was not available and was underdevelopment. The evaluation team received a copy of the advanced training materials mid-June, 2011.

Recommendation 11: Develop a method of assessing Participant's initial level of computer and Internet skills and placement guidelines, develop an SOP on their use, and train CPMs to use the assessment and placement guidelines. Develop a reporting system to track placements and changes in placements.

Finding32: The CLASP end-of-training computer and Internet basic proficiency evaluations are not used consistently by CPMs

The project participants are required to successfully complete an assessment of their skills at the end of the twelve week training period. The evaluation team was provided copies of the assessments. The CPMs are inconsistent in the way they administer the assessment. Some ask the participants to show them the skills when the CPMs call them out (show and tell), some used the test as a script for the class, literally teaching "to the test. " Several CPMs say that they hold a special session to review skills before participants are asked to complete the assessment.

Recommendation 12: Develop a consistent procedure to use for end-of-training computer and Internet proficiency to ensure consistency in skill attainment and to assure that new computers are issued only to those with appropriate computer and Internet skills.

3. Awarding computers.

One of the most significant barriers to computer use and Internet adoption among low income elders and people with disabilities is the cost of computers and access to the internet. In order to overcome this barrier the project makes free laptop computers available to people who successfully complete the training program and who demonstrate proficiency in computer and Internet use. Free computers are given in the public graduation ceremonies that occur after the twelve week training sequence.

FINDING 33: The project gives free computers to participants who have completed the CLASP training process. The awarding of free computers at graduation ceremonies served to acknowledge the achievement of individual participants and to generate awareness and positive support for the project in project buildings and neighborhoods.

Evaluation Question 2: What factors influenced participation and non-participation in the project?

Understanding the motivating and deterring factors to project participation is important to understand. People in disadvantaged groups, such as those served by the project, face numerous barriers to Internet use landing them disproportionately the digital divide. An important focus of this evaluation was elucidating reasons for nonparticipation. Many people involved with the project were asked questions about the factors that influenced participation.

FINDING 34: Opinions varied considerably among the many people interviewed regarding the factors that influenced participation and non-participation in the project.

The evaluation team met with and interviewed several influencers. Influencers are well-known, well-liked, and highly visible residents. They described efforts they had undertaken to encourage participation. One in particular indicated that some residents had concerns about privacy and that those concerns were a barrier to resident participation. She indicated that public housing residents can feel threatened when asked for information by "the government." Despite these concerns, the influencers interviewed were very enthusiastic supporters of the project, said they do all they can do to promote enrollment and have enjoyed participating.

The evaluation team asked numerous people involved with the project including, CPMs, participants, non-participating building residents to give reasons why people chose to not participate in the project. Their responses, given in order of frequency, are:

- Security/privacy concerns,
- Fear of "the Government,"
- Inability to read,

- Scheduling conflicts with work, medical appointments, and similar,
- Lack of interest failure to see the relevance of computer and Internet training.

Recommendation 13: Connected Living should continue efforts to recruit participants to the project. The marginal gains are likely to be small but could improve as the project becomes more deeply inculcated in the culture of the buildings and as CPMs develop rapport and trust with building residents.

Key Six -Month Project Outcomes

Ten key outcomes may be used to describe the achievements of the project as of the first six months of implementation. These are listed below and also contained in Table 7 by participating building.

1. Connected living successfully launched the project in all 23 facilities.

2. 1,161 people have attended project launch parties many others have attended other project awareness-raising events.

3. Discussion group sessions have attracted 7,037 unique visits from building residents.

4. All 23 project buildings have completed the first round of twelve-week training sessions, 9 buildings have completed two rounds of training, and 4buildings have begun the third round of training.

5. Connected Living has undertaken news and media-based promotional efforts (public announcements, press releases, etc.) that have reached an estimated 696,736 people in the communities surrounding the 23 project buildings.

6. 1,529 or 53.6 percent of building residents and581 neighborhood residents have enrolled in computer training.

7. 613 or 40.1 percent of the building residents who enrolled in computer training graduated.

8. 208 people from building neighborhoods who enrolled in computer training graduated.

9. 638 free computers have been given to building residents, and 8 refurbished computers have been given to neighborhood training participants who have graduated from the project.

10. 32 building residents and 8 neighborhood training participants subscribed to the internet as a result of the program.

Table 7
Project Outcomes through June 2011

Building	Number of Adult Residents	Unique Participants Since Launch	Percent of Adult Residents Participating	Number of Proficiencies Passed	Free Computers	Number of Participants graduated	Percent of Participants Graduating	Percent of Total Resident Population Graduating
Adlai Stevenson	182	57	31%	47	47	49	86%	27%
Azzerelli Tower	96	57	59%	28	0	30	53%	31%
Bethel New Life	167	68	40%	25	25	25	37%	15%
Bridgeport	86	42	49%	20	18	18	43%	21%
Churchview	84	43	51%	11	10	11	26%	31%
Elois McCoy	62	39	63%	2	7	19	49%	33%
Golden Years	150	79	53%	44	41	50	63%	33%
Hillside Heights	122	63	52%	39	0	39	62%	32%
Hollis House	49	24	49%	18	18	18	75%	37%
John F. Kennedy	182	81	45%	54	34	57	70%	31%
Mazon Park Tower	24	23	96%	10	0	14	61%	58%
Midtown Tower	97	72	74%	28	28	31	43%	32%
Mills Park Tower	195	82	42%	0	0	0	0%	0%
North Main	170	111	65%	36	35	42	38%	25%
Olesen Plaza	140	54	39%	18	0	0	0%	0%
Park Terrace	161	81	50%	2	0	0	0%	0%
Sankofa House	59	59	100%	18	17	18	31%	31%
Saratoga Tower	97	63	65%	35	31	34	54%	35%
Spencer Tower	207	121	58%	42	34	35	29%	17%
Spring Valley	185	53	29%	26	0	32	60%	17%
Sunset Heights	173	101	58%	43	39	43	43%	25%
The Oaks	75	60	80%	0	15	43	72%	57%
Washington	72	23	32%	14	12	14	61%	19%
	2,835	1,456	51.4%	560	411	622	42.7%	21.9%

Appendix A

CLIP Web Portal and Curriculum Materials Connections Based on Instructional Design Principles.

CLIP Web Portal and Curriculum Materials Connections

Based on Instructional Design Principles

Overall Observations, Comments and Suggestions

1. Curriculum Materials as They Relate to the Connected Living Website

Message Design. Textual elements of instructional materials and websites should have cohesive, clear and concise language to aid in trouble free learning and understanding. Instructional materials should focus on gaining the attention of the learner, activate prior knowledge they have in long term memory, minimize misunderstanding of content and support the motivation to learn (Gagne, Briggs & Wager, 1992; Morrison, Ross & Kemp, 2004).The learner's motivation to learn will diminish or improve depending on how the information is presented: through in-person training sessions supported by PowerPoint presentations and/or videos and supplemental printed materials.

Instructional design principles stress the importance of overall styles/templates used in the design of instructional materials that should remain consistent throughout the plan. I found that there was very little similarity between the visual design of the curriculum materials and the website interface and graphics. I suggest that the curriculum materials be redesigned to match the overall style of the nine main content areas of the website so the lessons and handouts have a "visual connection" to the website. This would help the participants see the connection of the training materials with the website (and vice versa).

Message design also considers the implementation of a variety of media to address the different learning styles of the learners. Learners' responses to how you present the information will differ depending on their prior learning experiences and skills. Because the majority of the participants in the Connected Living curriculum training are seniors, they bring a wealth and variety of experiences to the learning environment. The training sessions consist of a variety of content presentation strategies: brief lectures, one-on-one assistance, videos, self-directed tutorials and printed handouts. Providing content through these different perspectives is beneficial for the diverse participants in the training sessions. In summary, I found that the majority of the Connected Living curriculum materials were partially connected to the website.

Of primary importance is the re-design of the PowerPoint presentations – the graphics and screen captures should match those of the nine main content areas of the Connected Living website. This effort would demonstrate the connection of the curriculum to the website to both the participants and the instructors. Second, all the training handouts and the Advanced training Word documents should follow a similar template or design scheme that follows the website main content areas. Also, I suggest that names of the three curriculum areas be changed to Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced which are more recognizable labels for different levels of performance training. Finally, I suggest that all of the training materials, the PowerPoint presentations, Handouts, and Instructor Guides, including the names of the files, be labeled for

immediate recognition. For example, the first PowerPoint slide for the Beginning and 201 Series should have a title so the participants and the instructors know exactly what they will be covering. The Advanced training Word documents all have a title at the top of the page.

2. Curriculum Lesson Agenda as Goals

Each of the Basic Computer Lesson and 201 Series PowerPoint presentations begin with an Agenda slide that lists statements and/or questions about the content to be covered in the lesson. Although presented as an agenda item, each of the points could be considered what I would call loosely structured goals that inform the learner of the content to be covered in the lesson.

Sound instructional design includes instructional goals as a means to drive the course. Mager (1997) calls objectives "blueprints" because they guide the teacher to teach "what needs to be taught" (p. 73). The exercises reviewed in these curricula related to specific goals/objectives and the connections were clearly stated. "Communicating the objective appears to be an act consistent with the frankness and honesty of a good teacher. The act of verbalizing the objective may help the teacher to stay on target" (Gagne, Briggs, & Wager, 1992, p. 191).

As observed, the "agenda" items provided at the beginning of the Basic Computer Lessons and 201 Series PowerPoint presentations were tied to the nine main content areas on the Connected Living website. For example, after clicking the "Mail" content area of the Connected Living website, the participant will see the (email) Inbox and Menu items, one of which is "Compose Mail." Inconsistent with the Connected Living website menu item "Compose Mail," (which is in black letters on a white background that, when clicked, the letters turn green on a grey background), Slide #11 of the Beginner Computer Lesson #5, Step 2 and Section 8 of the Beginner Lesson 5 Instructor's Guide say, "Click on the ***green*** "Compose Message" button.

In another example, which reveals an inconsistency in the curriculum/website connection, the Basic Computer Lesson #12, Agenda Slide #2 (Use the My Memoirs section to write your life stories!) and related slides and the Instructor's Guide, direct the participants to the My Memoirs content area of the Connected Living website. It appears that the My Memoirs content area has been changed to "My Stories." Therefore, all of the My Memoirs curriculum materials need to be changed to match the My Stories content area of the Connected Living website.

In summary, I found that most of the curriculum agenda items (on the PowerPoint presentations and the Instructor's Guides) would suffice as instructional goals and were related to the Connected Living website, with changes as mentioned above.

In an effort to show connections of the curriculum to the Connected Living website, I suggest that each of the curriculum lessons be identified with specific main content areas of the Connected Living website. Doing so would help strengthen existing instructional design principles found in this curriculum and identify those principles that need to be improved and/or included.

3. Curriculum Tests

Consistent with instructional design principles, the curriculum tests were partially written as criterion-referenced tests. Because the Beginner Computer and 201 Series PowerPoint presentations listed loosely structured goals for each lesson (as agenda items), it should be these goals that would be used to write the test items (the test items should match the behavior (what is expected of the learner) specified in the goal.

Inconsistent with best practice in writing criterion-referenced test items, however, some of the test questions did not measure the exact behavior described in the goal (agenda item). For example, on the Beginner Broadband Assessment, question #8 asks the participant to "Print the first page of this selected "Broadband" website." In reviewing Lesson #10 related to this test, the goal (agenda item) was "Learn How to Print Web Pages." However, the test question asks the participant to print the first page of this selected "Broadband" website. There is not an exact match between the goal and the test question. Therefore, the participant might not be able to correctly answer the test question because they were trained to and presumably practiced printing a web page but not specifically the "first page of a selected "Broadband" website." Further, the word "Broadband" was not included in the curriculum materials.

In summary, I found that the curriculum tests were partially related to the curriculum materials and not directly related to the Connected Living website.

I suggest that the curriculum test questions be carefully constructed based on sound test design strategies. Each of the reference books at the end of this report provides the necessary information to write sound test questions.

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Appendix B

Feedback on Beginner Computer Lesson PowerPoint Slides and Instructor Guide

Feedback on Beginner Computer Lesson PowerPoint Slides and Instructor Guide

I. Feedback on Beginner Computer Lesson PowerPoint Slides

General Comments and Suggestions

1. Use a san-serif typeface for projected media such as PowerPoint to better help the user read the text. This is important because different computer monitors have different resolutions and data projectors may have less powerful light sources to adequately project the image. Finally, visually impaired users may find it easier to read san-serif text than text with serifs.
2. PowerPoint bullet points are more legible when they are left justified instead of centering the bullets on the slide.
3. Use a different slide template that does not interfere with the text – several slide titles have words that are obscured by the circle in the title area.
4. If you expect that users will have access to the PowerPoint slides, remove the animation from those slides where all animated text appears on one slide so the users could look at and read slides when in slide sorter view. For example, Lesson #1, slides 7, 8, 9, 17; Lesson #2, slide 10, Lesson #3, slides 8, 13, Lesson #4, slides 5, 6, 7, 10.
5. Avoid use of animation where sentences cross over one another and/or quickly enter from the bottom and top. This type of animation can distract the user and interfere in learning the content.
6. Correct slide titles that have single words on the second line – reduce the font size to avoid this issue.
7. Add relevant images to some of the slides to break up the text. Text heavy slides can easily bore the audience, especially if the instructor reads the bullet points directly from the slide.
8. Add a "Vocabulary" button to slides where special computer terminology is used so users can be immediately be taken to a word bank to search for the definition of a word they might not know. This can also be accomplished by creating a hyperlink on words that might need a definition.
9. I do not see any differentiation of content for disabled users compared to elderly users for this training. How will you accommodate individuals with various disabilities during this training?

Beginner Basic Computer Lesson #1 PPT

- Slide #16: Touchscreen – will the users have one to use and then will they have one after they leave the classroom – is it a relative task to learn if they will not have access to a touchscreen computer? Later, on slide #17, you mention that most people don't have a Touchscreen computer (yet). I find it unlikely that your audience will have touchscreens so it would be better to mention a mouse is the typical tool to use to work with a computer.
- Slides # 5 and 7:Animation on some slides could be problematic for some users – better to have text appear on the slide instead of animating from the bottom of the slide
- Slide #8: "Pocket PC fits in your hand" Suggest that you show a pocket computer actually in a hand for better association.
- A Simple Analogy: A Computer is Like a Garage: Slide #9 could some of the students not have garages? Could some students not have a lawn mower or even a lawn to mow?
- Computer desktops have more than software programs such as files and folders. Slide #14

- Slide #15: You mention “To open a software program” to click it twice – you say that you demonstrate but then you have the user click on the Internet icon – not really a “software” – could confuse the user.
- You ask the user to move the mouse so that the cursor is on top of the Internet Explorer icon – do they know what the cursor is? Suggestion: include a hyperlink button for users to access a vocabulary bank when using terminology on the slides.

Beginner Basic Computer Lesson #2 PPT

- The Cursor slide should be placed in Lesson #1
- Slide #3: “How do you open a software program, from the desktop, using the touch-screen?”
- Slide #4: underlined text was used for emphasis but should not be used for projected media such as PPT because underlined text indicates hypertext in digital media. Bolded and enlarged text is enough emphasis.
- Slide #7 – why ask user what is a text box or window if they probably don’t know. Instead, show them a screen capture of a text box or window.
- Better to use the word “Press” instead of “hit” when referring user to press a key.

Beginner Basic Computer Lesson #3 PPT

- Slide #11: Text Links and Graphical Links: Show examples of Underlined text links, Non-underlined text links, and Graphical links – these are not expanded upon in subsequent slides.

Beginner Basic Computer Lesson #4 PPT

- Animation on slide #5 is very difficult to read because of the up and down animation. It would be much more effective to have the text to appear without the animation.
- Out of place bullet on slide #6 (For example, some might say, “If you don’t know the answer. . .”
- Slide #7: “use” is used in place of the word “press” (or “hit” as you have used in the PowerPoint presentation.
- Slide #7: there is a problem with some animation – it actually overlaps text so the user would not be able to read it.

Beginner Basic Computer Lesson #5 PPT

- It seem counterproductive to mention in Slide #5 that anyone living outside one’s community cannot send a message without being invited but that is Slide #6, you say that anyone within one’s community (fellow residents and staff members) can send messages without being invited. What if someone received a message from a community member that they do not want to communicate with?
- Slides #7, 9: Avoid using just the male pronoun “he” or “him” when referring to others; it’s better to be inclusive and to use “he or she” and “him and her.”

Beginner Basic Computer Lesson #6 PPT

- Slide #4: Use the word “two” instead of using the number 2 (first sentence)
- Will users know how to get back to the PowerPoint slide after clicking on the Senior-friendly games? Also, how will you differentiate between your audience (low income seniors and those who are disabled when your slide says: “Senior-friendly games”?
- 3-Point Showdown This link is broken. http://arcade-sports-games.pogo.com/games/3-point-showdown

Beginner Basic Computer Lesson #7 PPT

- Slide #9: typically you provide an answer to questions posed on slides. This slide is an exception – I was waiting for the answer but it did not appear.

Beginner Basic Computer Lesson #8 PPT

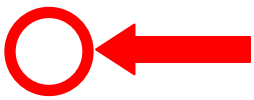
- Slide #5: You begin the slide with a negative statement (Why bother learning to type?). Why not approach typing with a positive spin such as “What are the benefits of knowing how to type?”
- Slide #6 could use an image of an old typewriter to show the structure of the keys and how they would strike the paper when pressed.
- Slide #10: Use the word three instead of the number “3” (sentence #2)
- Slide #14: Remove the underlining on the text.

Beginner Basic Computer Lesson #9 PPT

- Slide #4: Change the first sentence to make it more positive. For example, “What are the benefits of learning how to type?”
- Remove underlining on all slides. Instead, emphasize words or phrases with bolded text or use a different color or use italics.

Beginner Basic Computer Lesson #10 PPT

- You used the term “dialogue box.’ I don’t recall you using the term before. Add it to a word list that can be accessed via a hyperlink on pages with special terminology.
- Use a transparent circle with a contrasting color to encircle areas to which you have arrows pointing. For example:



- Slide #9 (and others related to printing a web page. Will later lessons teach users that what they see on the web page might not be what is printed on the page?
- Slide #12: Remove underlined text.

Beginner Basic Computer Lesson #11 PPT

- Slide #3: Change the number 3 to “three.”
- Slide #8: Remove the underlined text.
- Slide #11: Remove the underlined text.

Beginner Basic Computer Lesson #12 PPT

- Slide #6: Remove “The Benefits” in the body – it is already stated in the title.
- Slide #12: Remove underlined text.

II. Feedback on Instructor Guides

General Comments and Suggestions

1. How are the instructors trained to work with individuals with disabilities? None of the blue text emphasizes alternative steps or methods of working with individuals with disabilities.
2. Language used in some of the blue “instructors’ text” should be more definitive. For example, when stating “this might be a good time to” or “you may want to.” Instead, be more explicit and have the residents complete a task or distribute the handout. This is important because with a new trainer/teacher, he or she might not know exactly what to do. Use definite language and avoid any “fuzzy” language that could be open to interpretation.

Beginner Computer Lesson 1

- Avoid using the pronoun “she.” Instead, use he or she and him or her.

Beginner Computer Lesson 2

- Section 5: Be sure not to confuse the residents by saying, “the cursor can only be placed in text boxes . . .” Instead, say that the cursor can be placed inside a text box or on the page of the document.
- Section 8: I think it is better that all residents are able to master highlighting text rather than moving on to the final challenge so the “community of learners” are at the same level.
- Section 9: The word “participants” was used instead of “residents.” Be consistent when referring to those who are enrolled in the training sessions. Also, use the word “press” instead of “hit” when referring to using a key to activate a command.

Beginner Lesson 3

- Section 1: Use of the words “participants” and “hit” – see above.
- Section 8: This section is a perfect example of why you should not be using underlines for emphasis in PowerPoint slides or Word documents. The “Underlined text links” [where you

show at least one example], could be confusing or frustrating to the residents who may try to click on underlined text that is used for emphasis but is not a hyperlink.
- Section 10: remove the underlined text.

Beginner Lesson 4

- See suggestion #2 above.

Beginner Lesson 5

- You mention that it is unfortunate that the PowerPoint slides in this lesson are very text heavy. Add screen captures to accompany the text to add interest and relevance to the slides.
- Section 2: Instead of the instructor helping some residents log in, ask the residents to help each other – there may be some individuals who catch on quickly and can assist others.

Beginner Lesson 6

- You mention "seniors" in the first paragraph. Are you also considering individuals with disabilities throughout the lessons?
- Section 1: You begin by stating, "You may want to start by asking if anybody practiced the week . . ." I suggest that if you ask them to practice with homework, then expect that homework to be completed. This will encourage your residents to engage with the material and motivate them to do the homework (if they see that others did the homework, others will be motivated to do the same).
- Section 3: Play SPORTS games link is broken..
- Section 5: Mahjong Dimensions link is broken (http://games.aarp.org/games/mahjongg-dimensions-stouffers.aspx)

Beginner Lesson 7

- Remove underlined text unless it is hypertext.
- Section 6: You state, "You may want to make this process as interactive as possible." I suggest that you DO make as many parts of the lessons as interactive as possible. Have the residents talk among themselves to come up with an answer to a question you ask. This will engage the audience.
- Section 7: Be sure to alternate showing what the residents bring to share so everyone gets an opportunity to "show and tell."

Beginner Lesson 8

- Remove underlined text unless it is hypertext.
- The handout ***should*** be printed in landscape and not portrait.

- Section 3: How will you accommodate individuals with disabilities such as strokes, who may not be able to use their right or left hand, or someone without a right or left hand? What if someone cannot feel the keys due to neuropathy or another neurological condition?
- Section 4: you mention in the blue text, “Whatever you think is best!” should have all of your residents in mind – your audience will drive the instruction.
- Section 5: change the language to say, this is a good time to give the residents a copy of the handout (instead of saying this might be a good time . . .) Be specific because with fuzzy language, a new instructor might not know exactly what to.

Beginner Lesson 9

- Section 1: Use specific language – not “you may want to start by asking,” instead, ask!
- Section 10: This IS the time to distribute the handout (not “This is probably a good time to distribute . . .).

Beginner Lesson 10

- Section 3: Circle the “Print” button, the Print Icon and the word file in Firefox – this will make it easier for the trainer/teacher to see it as well as the residents.
- Section 4: Change the language to say, “Distribute the handout . . .”

Beginner Lesson 11

- Sections 3 and 4: Have the instructor walk among the residents as they are searching for a health website to better answer questions or to guide the residents as they are using the computer.
- Section 6: This IS the time to distribute the handout (not “This is probably a good time to distribute . . .).

Beginner Lesson 12

- This IS the time to distribute the handout (not “This is probably a good time to distribute . . .).

Appendix C

Feedback on 201 Series Computer Lesson PowerPoint Slides and Instructor Guide

Feedback on 201 Series Computer Lesson PowerPoint Slides and Instructor Guide

I. Feedback on 201 Series Computer Lesson PowerPoint Slides

Overall Observations, Comments and Suggestions

1. If the 201 Series is considered intermediate level, why does each of the slides say "Basic" Computer Lesson? Should the slides not say, "Intermediate Computer Lesson" as this is the second level?
2. Use a san-serif typeface for projected media such as PowerPoint to better help the participant read the text. This is important because different computer monitors have different resolutions and data projectors may have less powerful light sources to adequately project the image. Finally, visually impaired participants may find it easier to read san-serif text than text with serifs.
3. PowerPoint bullet points read better when left justified instead of centered on the slide
4. Use a different slide template that does not interfere with the text – several slide titles have words that are obscured by the circle in the title area.
5. If you expect that participants will have access to the PowerPoint slides, remove the animation from those slides where all animated text appears on one slide so the participants can look at and read slides when printed as handouts.
6. Avoid use of animation where sentences cross over one another and/or quickly enter from the bottom and top. This type of animation can distract the participant and limit learning the content.
7. Correct titles that have single words on the second line – reduce the font size to avoid this issue.
8. Avoid using "they," "it," "them" instead of the noun these words represent. This helps clarify the content being discussed

201 Series 1

- Slide #2: Does not include a review of the previous lesson.
- Slide #2: Remove underline.
- Slide #2: "In short, to download means to 'receive and save' a file that you do not already have on your computer." This is not completely true as a participant could download a file already on the desktop (which would give the participant the opportunity to replace that file with the new file).
- Slide #14: The current version of the Connected Living website does not include "Upload Attachment Optional" to the left of the "Browse" button. Instead, it says, "Upload."

201 Series 2

- Slide #3: Remove underlining.
- Slide #4: Confusing content—"Ensure you are streaming by understanding" this sentence is unclear. Also, you state that "no files should be downloaded to your computer" yet 201 Series # 1 covered downloading files. Clarify the content of slide #4.
- Slide #7: Is this slide necessary? The heavy text is difficult to read (in italics) and doesn't contain content necessary to work with Pandora to create a personal station. I suggest that you omit this slide.

201 Series 3

- Slide #3: Remove underlining.
- Slide #4: A new word, “Portal” has been introduced on this page. Add “Portal” to the recommended vocabulary list.
- Slide #6: “…download several (2-3) pictures…” – several is more than 2-3. Better to use “a few” pictures.
- Slide #7: A new word, “Minimize” has been introduced on this page. Add “Minimize” to the recommended vocabulary list.
- Slide #7: You say, “Right click anywhere on the desktop and select “New.” Better to give complete information: “Right click anywhere on the desktop and select “New” from the submenu that appears.”
- Slide #9: Remove underlining.
- Slide #9: The browser the participant is using will produce different text when right-clicking an image. Internet Explorer says “Save Picture As,” while FireFox says, “Save Image As.” I suggest mentioning this to clarify the difference.
- Slide #13: Say, “Select the ‘My Photos’ Tab on your “Connected Living” home page.
- Slide #15: Second bullet: “Once you left-click this, a box…” (Identify “this” with the noun it represents).
- Slide #15: Last bullet: “Once they are all loaded…” (Identify “they” with the noun it represents).
- Slide #17: Include a transparent circle with a bright outline to place over the area to which an arrow points for more accuracy in identifying what is being pointed out.

201 Series 4

- Slide #1: Does not include a review of the previous lesson.
- Slide #10: Include a transparent circle with a bright outline to place over the area to which an arrow points for more accuracy in identifying what is being pointed out.
- Slide #12: Include a transparent circle with a bright outline to place over the area to which an arrow points for more accuracy in identifying what is being pointed out.
- Slide #15: Include a transparent circle with a bright outline to place over the area to which an arrow points for more accuracy in identifying what is being pointed out.
- Slide #16: Does this slide need an arrow that points to any particular
- Slide #18: Does this slide need an arrow that points to any particular content?
- Slide #19: Include a transparent circle with a bright outline to place over the area to which an arrow points for more accuracy in identifying what is being pointed out.
- Slide #20: An image would be useful for these instructions.

201 Series 5

- Slide #17: A new word, “Default” has been introduced on this page. Add “Default” to the recommended vocabulary list.

201 Series 6

- Slide #2: Does not include a review of the previous lesson.

- Slide #3: A new word, “Spreadsheet” has been introduced on this page. Add “Spreadsheet” to the recommended vocabulary list.
- Slide #3: Remove underlining.
- Slide #5: Remove underlining.
- Slide #12: Include a transparent circle with a bright outline to place over the area to which an arrow points for more accuracy in identifying what is being pointed out.
- Slide #13: Include a transparent circle with a bright outline to place over the area to which an arrow points for more accuracy in identifying what is being pointed out.
- Slide #16: Include a transparent circle with a bright outline to place over the area to which an arrow points for more accuracy in identifying what is being pointed out.

201 Series 7

- Slide #2: Does not include a review of previous lesson.
- Slide #11: A new word, “Aggregates” has been introduced on this page. Add “Aggregates” to the recommended vocabulary list.
- Slide #15: Include a transparent circle with a bright outline to place over the area to which an arrow points for more accuracy in identifying what is being pointed out.

201 Series 8

- Slide #2: Does not include a review of the previous lesson.
- Slide #4: I suggest that you use an image of a computer desktop without an image which can obscure what you are attempting to show the participants. (You can always show the “image” desktop afterwards, to illustrate how one can customize their computer desktop.)
- Slide #8: Poor use of text – difficult to read and could be almost impossible to read for someone with a visual impairment.
- Slide #9: Include a transparent circle with a bright outline to place over the area to which an arrow points for more accuracy in identifying what is being pointed out.
- Slide #10: Use of third person tense (“If one wishes…” and “One may open…”) is too formal for this type of tutorial. Better to use first person “you” to personalize the text.
- Slide #11: Include a transparent circle with a bright outline to place over the area to which an arrow points for more accuracy in identifying what is being pointed out.
- Slide #12: Include a transparent circle with a bright outline to place over the area to which an arrow points for more accuracy in identifying what is being pointed out.
- Slide #13: Poor use of text – difficult to read and could be almost impossible to read for someone with a visual impairment.
- Slide #15: Remove underlining. Also, typeface is too small – better to use two slides for the content on this slide so you can enlarge the typeface.
- Slide #16: Screen capture could have emphasized the “Save As” menu you are demonstrating – enlarge that part of the screen instead of featuring the Connected Living image.
- Slide 18: As with Slide #16, enlarge the “Minimize” and “Maximize” icons so the participants can actually see what you are discussing. Also, include a transparent circle with a bright outline to place over the area to which an arrow points for more accuracy in identifying what is being pointed out.

201 Series 9

- Slide #2: Does not include a review of the previous lesson.
- This series seems a bit advanced for your audience (low income seniors and possibly disabled individuals).

201 Series 10

- Slide #2: Does not include a review of the previous lesson.
- This series seems a bit advanced for your audience (low income seniors and possibly disabled individuals). For example, Slide #7: "Sites get their information through information extraction, fuzzy logic and human labor." Are you confident that your audience is ready for such concepts, i.e., "information extraction," "fuzzy logic"?
- Slide #8: As with Slide #7 – I do not think low income seniors would use this web shopping service. Do you really think they would?

201 Series 11

- This series seems out of place – why was it placed after Series #7, 8, 9, 10? I believe it should be re-numbered as Series #7 (and subsequent series would need to be changed as well).
- Slide #3: Remove underlining.
- Slide #13: Remove underlining.

201 Series 12

- Slide #2: Does not include a review of the previous lesson.
- Slide #9: The content of the Federal Trade Commission's Privacy & Security website has fairly advanced content for new computer participants. Will you provide assistance to your residents who might have questions about the website's content?
- Slide #10: Include a transparent circle with a bright outline to place over the area to which an arrow points for more accuracy in identifying what is being pointed out.

II. Feedback on Instructors' Guide 201

Overall Observations, Comments and Suggestions

1. Because the words "beginning" and "advanced" are used to identify two distinct levels of skills to be learned, I suggest that you consider renaming the 201 Series from "Basic Computer Lesson" to "Intermediate Computer Lesson." Otherwise, the word "Basic" could be interpreted as the beginning level. "Intermediate" implies a step up from beginning.
2. Be consistent in naming each set of lessons, handouts, and instructor guides. The Basic series is intermediate level content and includes "201." I suggest that all three of the series include a number such as 101 for beginning, 201 for intermediate, and 301 for advanced, or, use the nouns alone, without the numbers.
3. The Advanced lesson Word documents are visually different than the Beginning and Series 201 PowerPoint slides. I suggest that you try to be consistent in the overall visual layout of each of the lessons to help the participants be familiar with the lessons.
4. Use of different words when referring to the participants in the training: Participants, Residents – I suggest that you be consistent when referring to the individuals who will be attending the computer training.

5. Instructor Guides #5, 6, 7, 8, 9 are formatted differently than the Instructor Guides #1, 2, 3. I suggest that the formatting for all Instructor Guides be the same to assist the trainer.

Instructors' Guide Basic Computer Lesson, 201 Series, #1

- Slide #3: Regarding downloading data: the instructor notes say, "downloading data is receiving data that is not already stored on one's computer . . ." This is not completely true as a computer participant could download a new set of data that could replace data that are already on the computer. It is best practice to give accurate information when teaching new content.
- Slide #4: third point on the PowerPoint slide: I suggest that you say specifically that uploading sends a file from your computer to be stored (not always permanently) on another computer (instead of saying permanently somewhere else).
- Slides #10, 11, 12: the Instructor notes say, "Instructor should note that these next few steps might be complicated for the participants; assure them that it will take a couple of times to try it in order to be able to remember it and do it on their own. Take it step-by-step for them so that they can see what you are doing, first."
- Slides #19, 20: The Instructor notes say, "This is a very handy skill to have because once you have mastered 'attachments' you can send pictures or word files or anything you want to your friends, family and communities – simply by sending a message and attaching a file to it!" I suggest mentioning somewhere in the training the problem with large image files that can crash computers or take a long time to load. These are typical problems and should be addressed in the training.

Instructors' Guide Basic Computer Lesson, 201 Series, #2

- Opening paragraph: use of the word "residents" vs. participants.
- Slides #10, 11, 12: Instructor notes say: "… then ask the group for suggestions." See previous bullet regarding reference to the individuals attending the training.

Instructors' Guide Basic Computer Lesson, 201 Series, #3

- Use of "participants" and "residents" in opening paragraph.
- Slides #7, 8: Instructor notes say, "Instructor may explain that these file folders can be created on the desktop as well as on the C drive, under My Documents, etc." I don't recall training about storing file folders on the desktop or the C drive. Ensure this information is covered before "just mentioning" it here in the training.
- Slides #15, 16, 17: Instructor notes refer to the complicated nature of this content. Will the participants have access to prior lessons or possibly some visual job aids to which they can refer to assist them in learning the content?
- Slides #18, 19: Instructor notes say, "…encourage them to be creative and this it is all up to them!" Some individuals have difficulty coming up with picture titles and captions on their own– I suggest that you provide some examples to help those participants who might be struggling with this task.

Instructors' Guide Basic Computer Lesson, 201 Series, #4

This section is missing

Instructors' Guide Basic Computer Lesson, 201 Series, #5 The first paragraph refers to the individuals as "students." Be consistent when referring to the trainees.

- Slides #3, 4, 5: The instructor notes refer to the individuals as "students." See previous bullet. Also, a new word could be added to a running vocabulary list: "queries."
- Slides #6-11: The instructor notes refer to the individuals as "students." See first bullet for these slides.
- Slides #12-15: The instructor notes refer to the individuals as "students." See first bullet for these slides.
- There are no notes for Slide 16.
- Slides #17-19: The instructor notes refer to the individuals as "students." See first bullet for these slides.

Instructors' Guide Basic Computer Lesson, 201 Series, #6

- Introductory paragraph uses the word "students."
- Slides #4-5: The instructor notes refer to the individuals as "students."
- Slides #6-13: The instructor notes refer to the individuals as "student."
- Slide #14: The instructor notes refer to the individuals as "student."
- Slide #15: The instructor notes refer to the individuals as "student."
- Slide #19: The instructor notes refer to the individuals as "student."

Instructors' Guide Basic Computer Lesson, 201 Series, #7

- Is the content in this section appropriate for low-income elderly participants? Are they looking for jobs? Or, is this content for this section for those participants with disabilities? Are there job searching services that specialize in assisting individuals with disabilities?
- Introductory paragraph uses the word "students."
- Slides #3-4: The instructor notes refer to the individuals as "student."
- Slides #5-7: The instructor notes refer to the individuals as "student."
- Slides #8: The instructor notes refer to the individuals as "student."
- Slides #9-10: The instructor notes refer to the individuals as "student."
- Slides #11-14: The instructor notes refer to the individuals as "student." Also, new words have been introduced: "meta search" and "aggregates" and could be place on the recommended vocabulary list.
- Slides #15-16: The instructor notes refer to the individuals as "student."

Instructors' Guide Basic Computer Lesson, 201 Series, #8

- This section seems out of place and could be presented at the beginning of this series (#8) or at the end of the beginning lessons.
- Slides #2-5: The instructor notes refer to the individuals as "student." Also, I suggest that you recommend more specific details about file management instead of letting the participants "move the icons around to what best suits them," which could lead to poor file management habits. Show screen captures of more organized folders and files and explain why they should be organized.
- Slides #6-7: The instructor notes refer to the individuals as "participant."
- Slides #8-12: The instructor notes refer to the individuals as "student." Also the first and second sentence of the instructor notes are contradictory: "One effective way to explain …to use the manila folder analogy. Some may not understand the manila reference." You state the analogy and proceed to say that some of the participants might not understand the analogy. Also, I suggest that you bring to the training session a set of manila folders and documents and "show" the participants what you are attempting to teach them. Visuals can help learners learn!
- Slides #13-15: The instructor notes refer to the individuals as "student." Also, as mentioned above, it's best to help the participants learn properly by showing them more effective ways to manage their files (and best not left up to them to decide what is best for them).
- Slides #16-17: The instructor notes refer to the individuals as "student."
- Slide #18: The instructor notes refer to the individuals as "student." Also, I suggest that you use visuals (enlarged cropped screen captures of the maximize and minimize buttons) for this kind of content to reinforce learning correct terminology.

Instructors' Guide Basic Computer Lesson, 201 Series, #9

- LinkedIn is a more advanced website – are your participants ready for a professional networking website?
- Slides 7-10: The instructor notes refer to the individuals as "student." Also, the last sentence could be modified to say, "Unlike things you say 'in person,' …"
- Slides 11-16: The instructor notes refer to the individuals as "student."

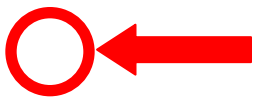
Appendix D

Feedback on Advanced Lessons

Feedback on Advanced Lessons

Overall Observations, Comments and Suggestions

1. The advanced lesson has a completely different "look" than the Beginner and Series 201 lessons. I suggest that you use a similar look for all three training modules – doing so will provide continuity and assist in recognition by the participants and the instructor.
2. I suggest including a brief introductory paragraph for each lesson to better help the participants understand what the lesson consists of (the goal of the lesson). This instructional event matches Gagne's Nine Events of Instruction where the first event, called Gaining Attention, provides basic information on the lesson.
3. The typeface style (Impact) is not appropriate for a wide range of participants:
    a. The style is too "chunky" (too strong and appears to be bolded when it is not)
    b. The letters of this typeface are too close together which can make it difficult to read. Some words look as though there is no space between the letters. This typeface is especially inappropriate for individuals with impaired vision.
    c. Because "Impact" typeface looks already set at bold, it would be difficult to bold the text for emphasis and notice any difference
    d. I suggest san serif typefaces such as Calibri, Arial, Tahoma or Veranda which is the standard style of typeface if the content is going to be projected or viewed online. If the content will be read in paper form, I suggest that the typeface style be Times New Roman, which is an easy-to-read typeface that is often used in print material.
4. Do not use underlines for emphasis as underlined text implies the word or words are hypertext. Instead, use a different color, italics or bold the text (as mentioned above, bolding the current "Impact" typeface is not an effective way to emphasize this typeface).
5. If the advanced lesson is going to be self-paced, use more screen captures and arrows pointing to content for more of the steps to help guide the participant through the lesson. Otherwise, some of the steps will be difficult to follow.
6. Consider using numbers instead of bullet points. This will help the participants see the progress they are making. And, if numbers are used, the arrows could include the number that matches the point being made – this technique is used in job aids, such as a set of instructions, which can be useful when teaching new content.
7. Because there is a lot of new content in this lesson, I suggest that you include a vocabulary list that can be accessed by clicking on the word which would bring up a definition and or example of the word. If that is not possible, then create a vocabulary list for each of the three lessons (combining them as one document for easy access by the participants).
8. Be consistent is use of arrows that point to areas on a diagram. For example, some of the arrows are thicker than others and some arrows are curved instead of being straight.
9. Use a transparent circle (that contrasts with the content) to encircle areas to which you have arrows pointing. For example:



10. If the advanced lesson is going to be self-paced, add contact information so the participants have someone to call if they need assistance.
11. Each of the lessons ends abruptly, with no concluding comments. I suggest that you write a brief summary paragraph to describe the important content and key tasks that occurred in the lesson. This helps bring closure to the lesson.

12. Grammar: I suggest that words such as “they,” “it,” “them,” be replaced with the noun they represent for better clarity.

Feedback on Lesson 1: Using OpenOffice.Org Writer to Create a Newsletter

- Provide one or two examples of a completed newsletter to help gain the attention of the participants and help them visualize what a completed newsletter looks like.

Feedback on Lesson 2: How to Use Open Office. Org’sCalc

- Page 2: The Function Toolbar image should be corrected so the arrows align with their respective letters. This could be achieved by moving the letters in the text box.
- Page 4: Under “Cells”: Avoid using the word “things” when referring to nouns – better to use nouns to help the participants learn correct terminology. The noun for this instance should be, “data” or “numbers” or “letters.”
- Page 5: First bullet point should begin with the noun phrase, “The cell address.”
- Page 10: A new word “expenditure” has been included on this page. Add “expenditure” to the recommended vocabulary list.
- Page 11: A new word, “sum” has been included on this page. Add “sum” to the recommended vocabulary list.
- Page 12: A new term, “click and drag” has been included on this page. Add “click and drag” to the recommended vocabulary list.
- Page 14: The Format Cells screen capture shows the English Euro symbol but the content on the page says, “In Format” select the “US” currency. This discrepancy could confuse the participants. I suggest you use an accurate screen capture that shows the US dollar symbol.

Feedback on Lesson 3: How to Fax with FaxZero.com

- Page 2: Two different colored arrows are used – black and red. I suggest that you continue to use red as you have done for all the previous arrows.
- Page 3: Use the word “Press” instead of “Hit.”

Feedback on Lesson 4: How to Find Free & Safe Anti-Virus Software

- Page 1: I suggest that you move the words “Safe Anti-Virus” to the second line so the word “Software” is not on the second line all by itself. The title will read better without the “orphan” word on the second line.
- Page 1: The “How-Tos” and “Spyware Horror Stories” links do not work.
- Page 2: The “Most Popular,” “New Release,” and “Editors’ Picks” links do not work.
    - How will you ensure website links will be available when the participants click on them?
- Page 3: When you ask the participant to read something online, do you expect some sort of feedback? If not, then what will motivate the participant to read the recommended article?

Feedback on Lesson 5: How to Use MapQuest

- Page 6: Use red arrows to maintain consistency throughout all three modules.
- Page 7: Bullet point three – refers the participant to "any of these email accounts…" by pointing an arrow to five different icons. I suggest that you name the icons to help the participants learn how to recognize the different icons.

Feedback on Lesson 6: Learning the EBay Web Site

- Page 5: First bullet point: Say, "The EBay registration form" instead of "It."
- Page 6: First bullet point: Say, "password" instead of "it" in the last sentence.
- Page 7: The hand-drawn letters and circles around the sections of the EBay screen capture image are not identified in the text below the image. I suggest that you refer to the letters in the text so the participants can follow the content to which you are referring.

Feedback on Lesson 7: How to Buy Something on EBay

- Page 1: I suggest that you continue to use red arrows as you have done for all the previous arrows.
- Page 2: I suggest that you continue to use red arrows as you have done for all the previous arrows.
- Page 3: First, I suggest that you continue to use red arrows as you have done for all the previous arrows. Second, consider shortening the arrows so they are not so obvious. Third, keep arrow width consistent. Fourth, use a transparent circle (that contrasts with the content) to encircle areas to which you have arrows pointing.
- Page 4: The grey text looks odd, as though something is wrong with the text. I suggest that you use a different color to emphasize the words that are in black.
- Page 5: I suggest that you move the words "Purchase with PayPal" to the second line so the word "PayPal" is not on the second line all by itself. The title will read better without the "orphan" word on the second line.
- Page 6: I suggest that you continue to use red arrows as you have done for all the previous arrows.

Feedback on Lesson 8: Online Shopping

- Is it a realistic goal to be teaching your participants about online purchases, especially if they are considered low-income? If so, then it might be a good idea to provide them with some basic information about online shopping and some of the disadvantages of purchasing merchandise online (and how this type of shopping could lead to unintentional debt).
- I suggest that Lesson 8: Online Shopping, be moved before Lesson 6: Learning the EBay Web site. Learning the basics about online shopping would better help the participants understand the information presented in Lesson 6: Learning the EBay Web Site.

Feedback on Lesson 9: How to Create a Presentation OpenOffice'sImpress

- Page 2: (Possibly) a new word "default" has been included on this page. Add "default" to the recommended vocabulary list.
- Page 6: (Possibly) a new word "transition" has been included on this page. Add "transition" to the recommended vocabulary list (and any other words related to creating a presentation in OpenOffice.

Feedback on Lesson 10: How to Use FontworkinOpenOffice's Impressto Create Impressive Presentations

- Page 1: I suggest that you continue to use red arrows as you have done for all the previous arrows.
- Page 4: I suggest that you continue to use red arrows as you have done for all the previous arrows.

Consider adding "new" words related to creating a presentation in OpenOffice to the recommended vocabulary list.

Appendix E

Review of the CLIP Portal

Feedback on Connected Living Internet Portal

Based on Website Design Principles

Overall Observations, Comments and Suggestions

1. Visual Design

The home page is nicely organized with nine distinct content-specific navigation buttons, each of which has text and an image that represent the content area. Unfortunately, none of these buttons (which are actually images) have an ALT text that would be appropriate for individuals who are visually impaired or using a screen reader. See *Accessibility (Section 508)* below.

Website Elements:

The color pallet demonstrates good contrast between the background and foreground elements. The colors are bright and complimentary. However, in the MySelf page, in the "Hello" bar at the top of the page, the user's name in white is difficult to see against the gold background. I suggest that the name be displayed in a darker color, such as dark blue, green or purple, all colors that would contrast well with the color pallet.

The home page makes good use of white space (areas without content) which presents an organized and uncluttered look.

The text size on each of the content area buttons is adequate and readable when viewing close to the monitor. The text size could be enlarged as there is plenty of space on each of the content area buttons.

2. Accessibility (Section 508)

"Section 508, an amendment to the United States Workforce Rehabilitation Act of 1973, is a federal law mandating that all electronic and information technology developed, procured, maintained, or used by the federal government be accessible to people with disabilities. States funded by the Assistive Technology Act State Grant program must also comply with Section 508. (Source: http://searchcio.techtarget.com/definition/Section-508, para. 1)

None of the images and non-textual elements on the website has "ALT Tags." This is a serious issue, especially since members of your audience include individuals with disabilities and/or are visually impaired. ALT tags (alternative text) provide text (which typically occurs as a pop up with a simple description of the element) when the cursor or screen reader moves over the element (which is typically an image). I suggest that the web designer add ALT tags to all of the images and non-textual elements of the portal to make the website provide better accessibility to its users and be Section 508 compliant. Although Section 508 requires that *state* and *federal* "agencies' electronic and information technology be accessible to people with disabilities," all websites, whether or not they are state or federally funded, should meet this web design requirement as best practice). (Source: http://visitmo.com/home/adacompliance.aspx, Paragraph 1)

3. **User Interface (Navigation)**

Navigation within the website is simple and straight forward. Some links take the user to a website outside the Connected Living site, some of which are videos. These videos are often embedded within a web page, thus, are small and difficult to view. I suggest that instructions be provided that show the users how to enlarge these embedded videos for better viewing – by clicking on the "FULLSCREEN" button on the video interface.

FULLSCREEN button 

Primary Navigation Icons

The main nine navigation icons are centered on the page and are identified by a different color with a label that identifies its content area. When each of the main, content-specific navigation buttons are clicked, the user is taken to that web page. However, the pages are not specifically labeled as the content area on the navigation button. For example, when I clicked the "Calendar" button, I was taken to the calendar page, but the page does not have a prominent "Calendar" label. Instead, the calendar interface is labeled "Mountain View Village." I suggest that each of the main, content-specific navigation pages be labeled to match the label of its navigation button.

Each of the vertical navigation buttons on the left side of the main website pages (Home, Back, MySelf, MyFamily, MyVillage, ? Help, Ambassador, Goodbye) should appear when the user clicks each of the nine main, content-specific navigation buttons. The following table shows the inconsistent use of the vertical navigation buttons.

Inconsistent Use of Vertical Navigation Buttons as they Appear on the Main, Content-Specific Navigation Pages

	Home	Back	MySelf	MyFamily	MyVillage	Help	Ambassador	Goodbye
Start Here!	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
Mail	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Photos	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Library	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Games	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Internet	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Stories	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Calendar	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Support	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

4. Meaningful Content

Some of the static images and videos (under the Home tab) on the Connected Living website: show the elderly but I never observed an image or video with a person with (an obvious) disability – other than an elderly person in a wheel chair, a walker or using an oxygen tank and breathing tube. The "Connected Living Now" video which focuses on individuals with *dementia*, was the only "disability" observed.

Start Here

When the Start Here content area is selected, the message area at the top of the page says, "Hello, XX XXX! You Are Viewing: Getting Started." The language is inconsistent from the label of the navigation button "Start Here" and should say, "…You Are Viewing: Start Here" OR, change the main navigation button from "Start Here" to "Getting Started." This wording might seem insignificant, but when teaching people how to use and navigate through a website, the language should be consistent.

In the "Help & How-To, Live Your Best Life, Explore the Web" topics, note that the description of Live Your Best Life says, … in your golden years." If the Connected Living website is meant for low income senior citizens and individuals with disabilities, are all the latter population considered "living in their golden years"?

In the "Help & How-To" section of Getting Started, the FAQs: Top Five – phone numbers are provided for users to contact the Connected Living Call Center (Is the phone number available 24/7 or are there specific hours? – this information should be included on the page)

In the "Explore the Web" section of Getting Started, none of the 22 images that represent the sub areas had ALT tags. I clicked on the Learn How to Type lesson and then, under the Video Series – Learn How to Type. I viewed the nine Video Lessons (YouTube.com video). First, the trainer in the video was wearing an inappropriate top for training purposes (spaghetti straps). Second, several of the videos were about specific parts of the keyboard yet the camera did not zoom close to the keyboard to assist the audience seeing what the trainer was doing. Also, the keyboard could have been modified to help the audience see what was being discussed. For example, the "home keys" could have been colored with a piece of plastic tape to differentiate them from the other keys.

The Online Tutorials (Start Here > Help & How-To)

The online tutorials are fairly well designed but some of the text is very small which could be difficult to see for elderly users or individuals with visual impairments. I suggest that you put information in a prominent location on each page with a tutorial that shows users how to increase the screen size.

Memoirs: Add a New Memoir tutorial: The current memoir, narrated by Mike McKenna, is that of a young person. I suggest that you use an elderly individual or a person with a disability who

would be more relevant to the audience. Using a more relevant narrator would show potential users that they can easily create a memoir.

The tutorial says, just above the video box, “To view the video tutorial, click the play button (the arrow) below.” Why not add a similar sentence that shows the user how to enlarge the screen to make it easier to see all of the information in the tutorial – some of the information is very small. Also, cursor can be enlarged and given a color other than white to make it easier to see and to follow.

Overall Observations, Comments and Suggestions

- Use images of elderly individuals for the examples instead of younger people to show more relevance.
- Check the sound levels for online tutorials (sound level is different for each tutorial)
- Correct narrator’s voice for better clarity (the male narrator’s voice (Mike McKenna?) is sometimes difficult to understand. His enunciation could be improved).

In summary, I found that the CLIP website to be user friendly: navigation is relatively easy to use and intuitive; the color palette is bright and cheerful. Vertical navigation buttons are inconsistent throughout different levels (pages) of the website and should be corrected. Of utmost importance is that the web designers conduct a thorough review of the website to ensure all of its content accommodates individuals with disabilities – the website does not meet ADA accessibility requirements.